ED 312 988 IR 013 999

AUTHOR Parer, Michael S.; Benson, Robyn
TITLE Professional Preparation and Staff Development for Academics Working in Distance Education. A Report for the Evaluations and Investigations Program.
INSTITUTION Gippsland Inst., Churchill (Australia). Centre for Distance Learning.
SPONS AGENCY Australian Dept. of Employment, Education and Training, Canberra.
PUB DATE Aug 88
NOTE 70p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies; *Distance Education; *Educational Innovation; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Instructional Development; Literature Reviews; *Professional Development; Program Evaluation; Questionnaires; *Staff Development; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS *Australia

ABSTRACT

This project had three goals: (1) to seek out the policies and practices currently in place to prepare academic teaching staff to develop, write, and teach in distance education; (2) to identify effective professional preparation and staff development practices for distance education currently in use in Australian postsecondary institutions; and (3) to provide some conclusions and recommendations concerning professional preparation and staff development activities that might help to improve future distance education practice. The first of four sections of the report describes the aims and methodology of the project, and the second reviews the relevant literature on professional preparation and staff development in distance education. Section three presents case study information about the institutions surveyed for the study, including subsections on policies and priorities, professional development practices, and ongoing professional development. The fourth section presents conclusions and recommendations in the areas of policy, responsibility and communication, resources, selection of appropriate staff, induction programs, ongoing professional development, institutional collaboration, and evaluation of staff development methods. Four appendixes include copies of the survey instruments, and four tables of data are provided. (113 references) (GL)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED312988

# Professional Preparation and Staff Development for Academics Working in Distance Education

A Report for the Evaluations and Investigations Program,
Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training,
Canberra

August 1988

Project Director: Michael S Parer

Research Associate: Robyn Benson

Centre for Distance Learning,
Gippsland Institute, Churchill, Australia

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Michael S. Parer

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES



IR013494

## Members of the Steering Committee

| | |
|---|---|
| **John Fenwick** | Senior Lecturer, Distance Learning, Victoria College of Agriculture and Horticulture, McMillan Campus |
| **Jack Foks** | Head, Victorian Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Off-Campus Network |
| **Norman Henry** | former Head, Education Unit, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology |
| **Terry Hore** | Director, Higher Education Advisory and Research Unit, Monash University |

The Project Director thanks the members of the Steering Committee who were appointed by the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, and later endorsed by the Department of Employment, Education and Training. These members gave generously of their time and enhanced the project. They met on numerous occasions with the Project Team at Monash University in the Higher Education Advisory and Research Unit, and we thank Terry Hore for making the conference room and facilities available.

The Project Director wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the three Universities, the four Colleges and the three TAFE bodies which participated in this study.

These were:

Adelaide College of Technical and Further Education, South Australia

Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education, Queensland

Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia

Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, Queensland

Deakin University, Victoria

Mitchell College of Advanced Education, New South Wales

South Australian College of Advanced Education, South Australia

Technical and Further Education External Studies College, Western Australia

TAFE Off-Campus Co-ordinating Authority, Victoria

University of New England, New South Wales

The Project Director also wishes to thank others who have participated in this project as Research Associates:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Nancy Chamberlain** | for the initial telephone survey and interviews |
| **John Fenwick** | for the research and case studies of three organisations representing business and industry |
| **Zofia Krzemionka** | for the research and case study of Adelaide College of Technical and Further Education |
| **Clare McBeath** | for the research and case studies of the Curtin University of Technology and Technical and Further Education External Studies College, Western Australia |
| **Daryl Nation** | for the research and case studies of Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, Deakin University, South Australian College of Advanced Education and the University of New England |

(The remaining case studies of Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education, Mitchell College of Advanced Education and the TAFE Off-Campus Coordinating Authority, Victoria, were undertaken by the Project Director.)

Acknowledgment is also made to Rae Hill, Tara Harle and Jennilyn Mann for their challenging computer and generous secretarial support; and to John Evans, Director, Centre for Distance Learning and Head, External Studies at the Gippsland Institute, for his continued encouragement and support throughout this project.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS


Page

**SECTION ONE: The Development and Implementation of the Project**

A. Aim of Project 1
B. Methodology 2
1. Target Group for Project 2
2. Procedures 2
i. Preliminary Procedure 2
ii. Sampling Procedures 3
a) The Development of a Set of Criteria for Sampling Institutions 3
b) Use of Criteria in Selecting Institutions 4
c) Identification of Key Individuals for Interview at each Institution 6
d) The Development of a Method and Appropriate Instruments for Data-Gathering 7
iii. Implementation of the Project 7

**SECTION TWO: Some Relevant Literature on Professional Preparation and Staff Development in Distance Education**

A. Previous Study 8
B. Context of the Present Study 8
C. Staff Development and Training: Needs, Approaches and Issues 9
D. Some Important Contributions to the Discussion of Professional Preparation and Staff Development for Distance Education 10
E. Implications for Practice 16

**SECTION THREE: Case Study Analysis**

A. Introduction 18
B. Policies and Priorities 18
1. Evidence of an Explicit Policy 19
2. Evidence of an Implicit Policy 19
3. Communication of Policy 20
4. Factors Affecting the Level of Priority Given to Professional Development for Distance Education 20
C. Professional Development Practices 22
1. Levels of Management of Professional Development for Distance Education 22
i. Senior Management 22
ii. Heads of Departments 22
iii. Academic Departments 23
iv. External Studies Departments 23
v. Specialised Staff Appointments 25
vi. Problems in Establishing Effective Management 26
2. Induction 27
i. The Short Induction Program/Activity 28
ii. On-the-job Training 28
iii. A Formal Orientation Program 29

3. Ongoing Professional Development 31
i. Common Staff Development Activities 31
a) Workshops and Seminars 31
b) Print Resources (handbooks, brochures, handouts, information packages, newsletters, exemplary course materials) 32
c) Individual and Peer Development 33
ii. Some Effective Staff Development Activities 34
a) The Course Team Approach 34
b) Educational Development/Instructional Design 35
c) Targeting and Release of Academic Staff 36
d) External Studies Unit Involvement in Course Accreditation and Reaccreditation 37
e) Other Effective Practices 37

**SECTION FOUR: Conclusions and Recommendations**

A. Fulfilment of Aim 38
B. Procedures 38
The Context of the Recommendations 39
D. Recommendations 42
1. Policy 42
2. Responsibility and Communication 42
3. Resources 42
4. Selection of Appropriate Staff 42
5. Induction Programs 42
6. Ongoing Professional Development 43
7. Institutional Collaboration 43
8. Evaluation of Staff Development Methods 43
E. A Possible Australian 'Academic and Professional Group' Model for Professional Development in Distance Education 43

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** 45

**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A Telephone Survey - List of Individuals Contacted 52
APPENDIX B Survey Instruments 53
APPENDIX C Reasons for Eliminating the Information Gained from Business and Industry in this Report 57
APPENDIX D Resources for Professional Development Programs 58

**TABLES**

Table 1 Characteristics of Institutions in the Proposed Sample 5
Table 2 The Proposed Sample 5
Table 3 The Concerns-Based Staff Development Matrix 14
Table 4 Meacham's Design Procedure for Staff Development Programs 15

## SECTION ONE: The Development and Implementation of the Project

### A. Aim of project

The aim of this project was to:

1. seek out the policies and practices currently in place to prepare academic teaching staff to develop, write and teach in distance education.

2. identify effective professional preparation and staff development practices for distance education currently in use in Australian post secondary institutions.

3. provide some conclusions and recommendations concerning professional preparation and staff development activities which might help to improve future distance education practice.

In order to achieve the above aim, this study set out to:

i. complete a literature survey of professional development and staff training in distance education, and include an analysis of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) Report (1981) and the Australian Committee of Directors and Principals (ACDP) two Reports on academic and general staff development (1984 and 1987), highlighting elements which were particularly relevant to distance education.

ii. survey by questionnaire and visits the professional development policies and programs at a representative sample of major Australian providers of distance education, including the TAFE off-campus operations, and evaluate these from the viewpoint of the participants.

iii. analyse induction programs, staff development practices and publications for staff guidance from the above major providers of distance education.

iv. focus on how academics can enhance their own discipline and career by participating in distance education

v. study how the staff development needs of sub-academic support staff involved in course design, distance education administration and counselling can best be met.

vi. examine how business and industry establish policies and practices to use distance education for training their staff.

vii. conclude with certain conclusions and recommendations in relation to professional preparation and staff development to improve distance education practices.

## B. Methodology

### 1. Target Group for Project

The primary target group for this project was academic staff who develop study materials and teach in the external mode. However, it was recognised that a collaborative approach is necessary in distance education, not only involving academics but also the associated support staff who assist in the design, development and administration of the external programs such as educational developers, instructional designers, editors, graphic designers, scheduling officers, printers and despatch officers who must work together harmoniously in order to service external students. It was therefore important that the project involve this sub-academic support personnel as a secondary target, not only because of their close involvement with teaching staff, but also because many of them were involved in various levels of professional development of academic teachers for distance education.

### 2. Procedures

#### I. Preliminary Procedure

A literature survey was conducted to identify information relevant to professional preparation and staff development for distance education.

At the same time a telephone survey was conducted among 27 individuals associated with professional preparation and staff development in distance education at 22 institutions in all states of Australia. (See Appendix A).

Three questions were asked:

- who is the best contact in your institution with regard to professional preparation and staff development in distance education? The contact may be:

  a) an educational developer who plans such programs
  b) an academic who has participated in a number of these programs.

- what have you found to be the most helpful reports or publications on professional preparation and staff development for distance education?

- what do you consider was the best staff development activity that has been conducted recently at your institution?

This survey had three main objectives:

- to identify innovative leaders in distance education institutions in Australia and assist in selecting a sampling group to survey and visit in order to scrutinise more closely staff development policies and practices.

- to identify the relevant literature that was used and recognised by the practitioners.

- to assist in the development of a questionnaire.

The input from these interviews and from the literature survey led to several broad decisions about the conduct of the project:

a) to develop a set of criteria for sampling institutions

b) to use these criteria to select a number of institutions to develop case studies of professional development activities

c) to identify a small group of key individuals who could be interviewed at each institution

d) to develop a method with an appropriate questionnaire to gather data about professional development activities at each institution.

## II. Sampling Procedures

To implement each of the above decisions, the following steps were taken:

### a) The Development of a Set of Criteria for Sampling Institutions

In order to select a sampling frame, the criteria below were considered:

- State
- Sector
- Size of institution
- Location
- Age
- Proportion of external students to on-campus students
- Status as external provider
- Energy in professional development activities

The first six of the above were subsequently recommended as the criteria for selection and the last two were not recommended for the following reasons:

- Status as external provider i.e. principal or specialist. The Project Team considered whether it may have been desirable to include specialist providers as well as principal providers and prepare questionnaires for them all. The intention of this project was to focus on the principal providers and thus it was decided that the case studies should be from these alone.

- Energy in professional development activities. Discussion at a Steering Committee meeting led to the conclusion that this was an ambiguous criterion as various institutions have widely differing views of such activities. The purpose of this project was to elucidate the nature of these activities, and it was expected that a range of relevant information and 'energy levels' would emerge.

*Sampling Criteria*

As a result of the above considerations, the following criteria were used in a sampling frame to select institutions and develop case studies of their professional development activities:

- State
- Sector — TAFE (T), College (C), University (U)
- Size of Institution — Large (L), Medium (M), Small (S)
- Location — Metropolitan (M), Country (C), Statewide (S)
- Age — Prior to 1970 (P), After 1970 (A)
- Student Proportion (of on to off-campus students)

  Solely External (S), Greater number External (G), Fewer than 50% External (F)

**b) Use of Criteria in Selecting Institutions**

The institutions/organisations from which the sample could be taken were:

| | |
|---|---|
| Technical and Further Education Bodies in each State | (TAFE) |
| Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education | (Capricornia) |
| Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education | (DDIAE) |
| Mitchell College of Advanced Education | (Mitchell) |
| Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education | (Riverina) |
| Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education | (GIAE) |
| South Australian College of Advanced Education | (SACAE) |
| Tasmanian State Institute of Technology | (TSIT) |
| Western Australian College of Advanced Education | (WACAE) |
| Curtin University of Technology | (Curtin) |
| Murdoch University | (Murdoch) |
| University of New England | (UNE) |
| Deakin University | (Deakin) |
| Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology | (RMIT) |
| Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education | (WIAE) |
| University of Queensland | (U of Q) |
| Macquarie University | (Macquarie) |

**TABLE 1: Characteristics of Institutions in the Proposed Sample**

| | State | Sector<br>T C U | Size<br>L M S | Location<br>M C S | Age<br>P A | Student Proportion<br>S G F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TAFE VIC | V | T | L | S | A | S |
| SA | S | T | M | S | A | S |
| WA | W | T | L | S | A | S |
| CAPRICORNIA | Q | C | M | C | A | G |
| DDIAE | Q | C | M | C | A | G |
| MITCHELL | N | C | M | C | A | G |
| SACAE | S | C | L | M | A | F |
| CURTIN | W | U | L | M | P | F |
| UNE | N | U | M | C | P | G |
| DEAKIN | V | U | M | C | A | G |
| | | 3: 4: 3 | 4: 6: 0 | 2: 5: 3 | 2: 8 | 3: 5: 2 |

(for key see Sampling Criteria on p.4)

**TABLE 2: The Proposed Sample**

| SECTOR | QLD | NSW | VIC | TAS | SA | WA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TAFE | | | TAFE | | TAFE | TAFE |
| CAE | Capricornia<br>DDIAE | Mitchell | | | SACAE | |
| UNI | | UNE | Deakin | | | Curtin |

The recommendations for the foregoing sample were supported by the following considerations:

*State*

Two representatives were included for each state except Tasmania. An alternative would have been to delete one institution, perhaps one TAFE and substitute TSIT to give Tasmania a representation. TSIT was omitted because of the small size of the distance education operation and its dependence on Victorian and South Australian institutions for a proportion of its program.

*Sector*

At least three institutions/organisations from each sector were included: three TAFE, four CAE, three University.

*Size*

Four large and six medium institutions were selected.

*Location*

The sample provided for three statewide, two metropolitan and five country institutions.

*Age*

Two institutions were pre 1970 and eight were post 1970. This reflects the growth of external studies after 1970.

*Student Proportion*

Three representatives were solely external, five had a greater number of external students and two had fewer than 50 percent external students.

The above selection appeared to cover adequately all the criteria. This was at the expense of an increase in the number of institutions and organisations to ten for the case studies, which was more than originally intended. However, given the desirability of a sufficient representation of TAFE this was an inevitable consequence.

**c) Identification of Key Individuals for Interview at each Institution**

It was proposed that six people in each of the selected institutions would be interviewed and these would be:

- The Chief Executive
- Head of External Studies
- Head of Educational Development
- One Head of School
- Two Academics - one participating in staff development activities
  - one offering an alternative point of view.

The six selected were intended to represent the views of: the Chief Executive Officer; a senior member of staff with responsibility for policies regarding staff development, such as the Head of External Studies; the head of Educational Development or equivalent, responsible for implementing the policies; and three members of the academic staff, one of whom was at the level of Head of School.

### d) The Development of a Method and Appropriate Instruments for Data-Gathering

It was decided to gather data at these institutions by an open-ended questionnaire followed by personal interviews. Two instruments were developed, one primarily to gather quantitative data from each institution and the other to be sent in advance and used as the basis of a face-to-face interview with each interviewee. These were both tested at Warrnambool Institute, the University of Queensland and at Gippsland Institute. These instruments (as modified on the results of this testing and as used in the project) are included as Appendix B.

## III. Implementation of the Project

A team of John Fenwick, Zofia Krzemionka, Clare McBeath, Daryl Nation and the Project Director used these instruments as the basis of interviews with six staff at each of the selected institutions to develop case studies of their professional development activities.

The interviews were taped and case studies written by members of the interviewing team. Because of the open-ended nature of the interviews and the wide variation in activities and commitment relating to professional development for distance education, both within and between institutions, the case studies which resulted were extremely diverse in content, level of detail, and method of presentation.

It was therefore decided not to include them in full in this report, but to analyse them in order to extract the information most relevant to the aim of this project. However, several lengthy quotes are included in the analysis to indicate the wealth of information which was gained. This analysis follows the literature survey and the implications of both for future practice are considered in the conclusion of the report. The tape recordings of all interviews and the case studies of each institution are retained at The Centre for Distance Learning at Gippsland Institute. The analysis excludes the information gained from the business and industry interviews because of the reasons outlined in Appendix C.

During the literature survey and these interviews it became clear that there were no widely accepted distinctions between the terms 'professional development', 'professional preparation' and 'staff development' and these terms are used interchangeably in this report. The vocabulary used to describe various positions relating to the planning and delivery of external teaching materials was also diverse and, although the term 'instructional designer' is used frequently in the report, there are also other labels such as 'educational developer', 'educational technologist' and 'course coordinator' used by various institutions, which appear to refer to a similar role.

A limitation to the information derived from the enquiry was that quantitative data obtained was not sufficiently precise to be of value. Figures and information given were often incomplete or not comparable between institutions, and provided an inadequate base from which to draw conclusions about the relative importance of professional development for distance education across the range of cases surveyed.

## SECTION TWO: Some Relevant Literature on Professional Preparation and Staff Development in Distance Education

### A. Previous Study

The current project followed up aspects of a previous research study on institutional support and rewards for academic staff involved in distance education programs undertaken by the Project Director for the International Council for Distance Education (Parer, Croker and Shaw 1988). Part of this former study investigated the views of 70 academics from four institutions (Deakin and Massey Universities, Gippsland Institute and South Australian College of Advanced Education) on various aspects of professional development using, among others, the following questions:

> Would you say that any special skills are required for teaching in distance education courses?
> Have you, or would you participate in seminars/workshops on distance education even though there is no institutional pressure to do so?
> What opportunities for staff development in distance education, if any, should be available in your institution?
> Do you think staff involved in distance education programs should be required to undertake formal staff development?

### B. Context of the Present Study

Since this project commenced, the Federal Government has issued a Green Paper on Higher Education and within this is discussed the issue of staff appraisal and staff development. The section is quoted in full below:

> "If staff assessment procedures are to succeed, then they should be supported by adequate staff development opportunities. There has been some expansion in institutional activity in this area which the Government wishes to encourage. Many institutions have established academic development units for this purpose. There are opportunities for expanding the role and support of these units within institutions, and possibly also for extending the services of established units to other institutions without such facilities.
>
> Institutions should consider options for ensuring an adequate flow of funds to staff assessment, development and training activities, which are in effect the processes of 'maintenance' of their resources. Innovative programs of staff development clearly have an important role in enabling institutions to make full use of their staff resources, to adapt to change and to take advantage of more flexible staffing arrangements" (Dawkins 1987).

Given the current political and economic climate, this statement clearly has implications for any consideration of issues relating to professional development and it appears important to set the current study in this context. However, recognition of the need for professional development is not new and the following sub-section summarises some of the literature which acknowledges this need, and some of the sources which provide possible approaches or consider issues relating to the implementation of staff development practice. Some useful references to assist academics in gaining skills and information applicable to distance education are included as Appendix D of this report.

The literature served to provide confirmation of the need for the project and to highlight potentially useful strategies, against which the information relating to current practice, derived from the case studies, could be compared. The implications for future practice from the literature will be considered in relation to those from the case study analysis in the conclusion of this report.

## C. Staff Development and Training: Needs, Approaches and Issues

The need for policies on staff development at academic institutions has been a matter of concern over recent years. In 1981 the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) discussed, without specific reference to distance education, what policies should be adopted to enhance staff development within Australian universities, including the aim and function of induction programs. This was followed in 1984 and 1987 by two reports on academic and general staff development by the Australian Committee of Directors and Principals (ACDP) which recommended the establishment of appropriate policies and methodologies. These documents will be discussed in the following sub-section.

In terms of distance education both King and Willmott (1983), and Parer, Croker and Shaw (1988), explored problems and needs related to academic staff development in distance education and associated practice, issues, options and principles. Jacobs (1987) referred particularly to the orientation practices and needs of distance education staff in Australian educational institutions.

Training needs and approaches have been the subject of extensive consideration (see, for example, UNDP 1983; UNESCO 1983, 1984) and approaches relating to individual disciplines, programs or institutions provide useful advice and examples for consideration. These include Trask's (1982) report on training courses for teachers and teacher librarians, Perraton's (1984) handbook which discussed the use of distance education for teacher training and examined the case for and against distance teaching, and Meligi's (1985) description of a distance education program designed to upgrade and complete the education of teachers in Egypt. Williams (1980) provided a training manual for telephone tutors who are an important component of distance delivery at Athabasca University. Meacham (1985) focused on suggestions arising from an investigation during early 1984 of educational institutions in the United Kingdom. The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology runs internal staff training courses; it offers a limited number of places to staff from other educational institutions and circulates descriptions of these courses (RMIT 1987).

Forster, King and Luke (1985) provided stimulus for discussion on professional development of distance educators. They discussed the nature of distance education, the professional needs of its practitioners, and what constitutes appropriate professional development. Their focus was on what practitioners do in distance education and how they reflect their practice. Willmott and King (1984) documented some issues surrounding the development of the Graduate Diploma in Distance Education at the South Australian College of Advanced Education and contrasted critical features of this program with that offered at the FernUniversitat at Hagen in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Elton et al. (1986) described a course which provides training opportunities for academic staff who wish to acquire professional orientation toward their teaching functions. Course origins, current practices and an independent course evaluation were described. Tentative conclusions were drawn concerning academic staff training for distance educators and ways distance study can provide for autonomous learning. Riley (1986) suggested that individual educational technologists have developed a variety of work styles including those characterised as knowledge expert, executive manager, social analyst and specialist. These styles of working, based upon work behaviours of educational technologists at The Open University, were compared in terms of practices, foci, aims, reference groups and philosophies.

Northcott and Holt (1986) analysed an instance of collaboration between the Australian Society of Accountants and Deakin University in designing, developing, delivering and evaluating an in-service distance education program for practising accountants. The developer's role as education technologist contributing to material development, text construction, testing, program evaluation and revision was analysed.

## D. Some Important Contributions to the Discussion of Professional Preparation and Staff Development for Distance Education

A significant contribution supporting the need for, and suggesting some issues relevant to, staff development in higher education, was the twelfth annual conference of the Society for Research into Higher Education in 1976 at the University of Surrey. This contribution is not specific to distance education, but it is appropriate to professional development of academic staff who teach externally. The conference proceedings remain one of the key documents in terms of academic professional development which are relevant to this investigation. The conference sought to consider the following questions:

1 Should staff be trained?

2 If so, how?

3 Is there more to development than training?

4 How do the aims and responsibilities of an institution affect staff development?

5 What about retraining?

David Billing, Registrar for Science, Council for National Academic Awards, noted that the term 'staff development' had been in common usage in education since the early 70s and he advanced a composite and comprehensive definition:

> "Staff development is a deliberate and continuous process involving the identification and discussion of present and anticipated needs of individual staff for furthering their job satisfaction and career prospects and of the institution for supporting its academic work and plans, and the implementation of programs of staff activities designed for the harmonious satisfaction of those needs."

He went on to outline that professional development activities include initial and in-service training in educational methods and curriculum development, increasing and updating subject knowledge, training in management and committee work, exchange or secondment, study release, research, development and scholarship, creative work, consultancy and professional practice, job rotation, administrative responsibilities, retraining and redeployment of staff and preparation for retirement. He noted that the major problem seemed to be the lack of time and money, coupled with lack of incentive to undertake work that is not directly related to immediate rewards such as promotion.

Dennis Fox of the Staff Development Service, Trent Polytechnic at Nottingham argued that professional development is not something which staff developers do to other staff, rather it is a co-operative exercise in which everyone plays a part, willingly or unwittingly. He considered that it is more akin to a system than to a process and for this to be effective there must be an institutional commitment to staff development which should be expressed in the declared policy. It should also take into account the multiplicity of roles performed by academic staff.

David Warren Piper of the University Teaching Methods Unit, University of London, argued that the practical implications of staff development are sevenfold:

1 Individuals should be encouraged to consider and prepare for their future careers.

2 Thorough analyses are required of the work undertaken by university staff.

3 Staff need time and support to follow development programs.

4 'Staff development' as a means of changing universities and the acceptance by departmental heads of their management role both need promoting.

5 We need to know more about how organisations in higher education work.

6 Departments need both the know-how and the means of implementing a staff development scheme.

7 Universities require a means of making policy decisions in respect to any conflict of interest which may arise between the career aspirations of individuals and the training needs as seen by their university.

Some institutions offer courses for their staff to improve teaching. One such was outlined by Dietrich Brandt, Centre for Research into Higher Education at Aachen, West Germany. The aims of these courses were:

1 to make obvious to the participants the problems of university education.

2 to develop and practise techniques of presenting material.

3 to foster an awareness of the various ways in which lecturers and students may interact.

4 to allow the participants to try out or to practise specific methods of teaching which may be considered alternatives to the usual behaviour in classrooms.

5 to bring about change in the structure of student/staff communication toward a more symmetrical process of teaching where both teacher and students think of themselves as being learners.

6 to stimulate as well as encourage the participants to support innovations and reforms in university teaching.

Paul Ramsden, then of the Institute for Research and Development in Post-Compulsory Education at the University of Lancaster, and now at the University of Melbourne, spoke of the importance of student feedback to staff in relation to professional development. He argued that:

1 the first potential contribution of student evaluation is to help staff identify student-perceived teaching strengths and weaknesses.

2 a second contribution is to help lecturers increase their awareness of the problems of teaching and learning and to encourage them to think more actively about their teaching aims and objectives.

3 a third use is to help create a more relaxed and understanding relationship between teachers and students so that students become more willing to offer constructive criticism.

The foregoing examples provide a useful summary of some of the important considerations which need to be addressed in the planning of staff development activities.

As noted earlier, important Australian resources relevant to professional development of academic staff are the Academic Staff Development Report by the AVCC Working Party (1981) and the Reports of the Working Party of the Australian Committee of Directors and Principals in Advanced Education (1984, 1987). These reports may be seen as giving a shape, suitable for the Australian context, to the general directions provided by the above examples.

The AVCC Working Party (1981) began its document with a quote, "the best way to learn to lecture is to lecture", which was also used in an earlier AVCC report and it exemplifies the attitude of many when the concept of professional development is mentioned. Professional development here was defined as:

> "those institutional policies, procedures and programs which assist academic staff to meet more fully their own needs as well as those of their students and their institution. While 'staff development' may be read by some as synonymous with 'improvement of teaching', we prefer a broader definition related to the potential improvement of all that an academic does in the course of his or her professional career."

Importantly, the Working Party noted that the introduction of staff development units has had a mixed response on campuses. At one extreme they are regarded as a token response to student complaints and at the other their presence is seen to relieve many staff members of any personal responsibility for improvement. The document argued that each institution should develop a systematic program for evaluation of the overall performance of the academic staff, which is likely to be helpful in providing information that the staff member rarely or never hears. Hoyt and Howard in 1978 reviewed faculty development programs in the United States and various related literature. They acknowledged that the literature on the topic was sparse and simplistic and difficult to use as a basis of judgment to determine whether faculty development was worthwhile. The Working Party argued that an explicit policy for academic staff development is needed. But how such a policy is to be formulated and where staff development programs are best located was left as an an open question. The Working Party argued for an institutional policy, for a role by departments and heads of schools and also that development units were a way of demonstrating the institution's support for professional development. The report argued for induction programs and spoke of the probation period of two years as too short. Reviews of staff performance should be accompanied by programs of staff development, normally devised on an individual basis and involving both schools and staff development units to enable staff members to improve their performance and career expectations.

The Working Party of the Australian Committee of Directors and Principals in Advanced Education (1984) defined staff development as:

> "a planned sequence of policies, procedures and activities providing a framework within which academic staff can develop in terms of their own professional needs and aspirations and in a manner in which these are harmonised with the existing and anticipated needs of their own institutions. It is an expected and, in general terms, a directed staff activity which will facilitate effective change within institutions, enhance existing strengths and contribute to the achievement of institutional effectiveness, including academic excellence."

The report spelled out that professional development of academic staff

> "aims at encouraging and providing opportunities for staff to use to the full their individual talents and to develop in ways which maximise the achievement of institutional goals. Professional development is not a single, once-only event in which a particular staff member participates, but a continuing process, in which a staff member and the head of department are mutually responsible, involving the identification, planning, implementation and review of staff development activities."

It continued:

> "Professional development is a process through which the needs of individual staff and their institutions are brought into close congruency. It is designed to maintain and improve the commitment and effectiveness of academic staff in relation to their current roles, to enhance the level of satisfaction they receive from their work and to provide them with opportunities to develop skills and understandings which will prepare them for future roles which might arise either in their institution or in others.

> Because of the importance of staff development in maximising the professional expertise of academic staff and in assisting colleges to adapt to changing circumstances, authorities charged with the approval of conditions of service for academic staff should recognise that staff development activities are neither privileges to be considered as part of the staff remuneration packages nor optional activities but form an integral element of a staff member's duties."

Thus, both these documents stressed the importance of the Head of Department in facilitating professional development as well as the need for the development of individualised programs.

A consideration of the issues relating to professional development for distance education seems to indicate that once the need for it is acknowledged there are two main requirements which need to be fulfilled. The first is institutional commitment to the concept which must be operationalised in appropriate administrative procedures. The second is the development of appropriate approaches to effect the desired changes in academic staff.

An analysis of the role of the individual in staff development activities provides some key insights into some of the factors which influence their success. In focussing on the process of change rather than the desired product, Meacham (1982) emphasised that in order to effect any innovation (i.e. external teaching) the concerns of those who will carry it out must be addressed.

He used the 'Concerns-Based Adoption Model' developed by Hall (1974) which postulates that concerns develop in a 'natural sequence' and that interest in higher level concerns cannot be engineered by outside agents unless lower level concerns have first been met. This model has been applied to staff development activities in an extra mural staff development program at Massey University (Slater and Tremaine 1987).

The model identifies seven levels of concern:

1 Awareness
2 Informational
3 Personal
4 Management
5 Consequence
6 Collaboration
7 Refocusing

and suggests that these must be addressed in the above order for effective innovation to take place. Possible strategies for each level are provided. The following Concerns-Based Staff Development Matrix (Table 3) was developed by Eastcott, Meacham and Hall (Meacham 1982).

TABLE 3. CONCERNS-BASED STAFF DEVELOPMENT MATRIX
(L.R. EASTCOTT, E.D. MEACHAM and G.E. HALL)

| STAGE OF CONCERN | SELF | | | TASK | IMPACT | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Awareness | Informational | Personal | Management | Consequence | Collaboration | Refocussing |
| **Typical expression of concern** | *I don't know anything about external studies and am not interested.* | *I don't know a great deal, but would like to know more.* | *I'm not really sure I can do it. How will this effect me?* | *Getting organised is taking all of my time.* | *How can I improve my work to increase student performance?* | *How can I work with others to make a greater impact?* | *I know a better way* |
| **Major focus** | Raising awareness. | Providing information. | Establishing relationships. | Demonstrating procedures. | Clarifying and evaluating instructional parameters. | Disseminating ideas and working with others. | Facilitating materials renewal. |
| **Strategies** – **strategy orientation** | Sensitisation to the need for improvement and establishment of a desire to know more.<br>Demonstration of relevance. | Provision of general descriptive information.<br>Outline of costs and benefits of proposed changes. | Reduction of the degree of perceived threat.<br>Development of confidence.<br>Reconciliation of individual to new ideas. | Demonstration of methods of reaching desired goals.<br>Provision of exemplary organisational procedures.<br>Provision of opportunities for successful practice. | Familiarisation of individuals with the principles of sound instructional design.<br>Re-inforcement of present skills.<br>Refinement of skills, especially those of evaluation. | Provision of opportunities to share concerns and expertise.<br>Development of linkages between academics.<br>Development of skills in collaboration. | Provision of an effective individualised support system.<br>Refocussing concerns into productive avenues.<br>Encouragement of pilot testing new ideas. |
| – **workshop strategies** | Short workshops in which instructors describe things they are doing now.<br>Workshops which emphasise the demonstration of a range of relevant materials and methodologies. | Short workshops and seminars providing descriptive information.<br>Short factual media presentations.<br>Addresses by lecturers who have successfully implemented desired changes.<br>Discussions by potential users. | Small group discussions based on mutual concern.<br>Involvement in workshop and discussion activities which will demonstrate costs, impacts, support avenues available. | Workshops which emphasise appropriate organisational procedures and schedules.<br>Problem solving workshops based on resource management.<br>Provision of operational models easily applied with little adaptation. | Workshops which facilitate sharing of ideas and instructional design skills.<br>Workshops which provide and/or develop sophisticated assessment/evluation schemes.<br>Workshops which clarify and develop operational instructional design models. | Collaboration workshops and seminars dealing with instructional design and management as a co-operative venture.<br>Development of networks of academics.<br>Seminars evaluating, and publishing materials and papers outlining ideas generated. | Workshops which facilitate extension of design models and management systems presently in use.<br>Workshops on analysis of the effects of proposed changes. |
| – **staff support strategies** | Provide resource materials for individuals.<br>Facilitate opportunities for people to talk with each other.<br>Use publicity campaigns of any acceptable form. | Provide relevant resource material to individuals.<br>Encourage site vists to successful innovators in appropriate areas. | Personal counselling encouragement about the individual's capacity to cope.<br>Establish realistic expectation for individuals.<br>Break down any change into easily achieved steps. | Be willing to address in a concrete manner specific 'how to' issues.<br>Provide individuals with starter packages.<br>Set small step time lines for tasks.<br>Establish staff support groups. | Provide regular encouragement and re-inforcement for what is presently done.<br>Act as a source of relevant topics of interest.<br>Involve individuals in staff meeting and workshop presentations. | Encourage the development of links between individuals and other institutions.<br>Encourage individuals to become group leaders. | Provide opportunities to individuals to be exposed to new ideas and materials.<br>Encourage pilot programmes for evaluation. |
| **Comment** | *Little concern or awareness may be quite legitimate and appropriate at times and should be accepted as such.* | *Information at this stage must be general, descriptive and concise.*<br>*Several short inputs are better than one extended discussion.* | *Concerns may be valid or invalid. Whichever is the case, they are nevertheless real to the person and should be acknowledged as such.* | *Immediate response to these is essential.* | *Staff at this stage need less time and assistance than those at other stages, who should take priority.* | *Staff at this stage are useful as group leaders.* | *Be cautious of both redirection which is antagonistic to the mainstream effort, and individuals who have no foundation to their desire for refocussing.* |

Many traditional staff development activities are directed at Stage 5 where the main focus is on clarifying and evaluating effective teaching techniques and an important implication is that these programs often fail because staff have not reached this level of concern. Meacham's Design Procedure for Staff Development Programs (1982) was developed to address this (Table 4).

**Meacham's Design Procedure for Staff Development Programs**

| Operation | Observation |
|---|---|
| 1) Define the innovation | Improve instructional material for distance education, for example |
| 2) Diagnose the concerns of faculty members, with regard to the innovation | Use Hall's Stages of Concern Questionnaire and/or open-ended statements |
| 3) Organise faculty members into groups, homogeneous with regard to their stage of concern | Use the Stages of Concern outlined in the matrix. In the first instance distinguish self, task and impact concerns |
| 4) Link each group with the appropriate focus and strategies | Refer to matrix. Pay particular attention to operationalising the links observed |
| 5) Produce an outline plan of the staff development program | Make sure the plan accommodates all sectors of the potential audience |
| 6) Operationalise the program | Allow for individual growth into higher stages of concern by introducing linking activities |

**TABLE 4**

In supporting the model, Meacham referred to the work of Nisbet (1974) and Eastcott (1981) to explain the deskilling potential of an innovation, and the threat involved in this which finds its expression in resistance to staff development activities. King and Willmott (1983) similarly emphasised the need to avoid threatening staff development situations because professional success is likely to be identified with personal worth and unlikely to succeed if based on a deficit model. They referred to a South Australian enquiry into teacher education which suggested that teachers are resistant to staff development activities which they have had no say in planning and which fail to promote academic autonomy.

Kelly (1987) used Meacham's model to argue that the instructional designer's role in staff development may be ineffective, or even disastrous, if an emphasis on instructional design principles ignores individual concerns, especially when the instructional designer works in a course team which reflects heterogeneous interests.

Consequently, if the advantages of professional development for distance education are accepted, then the administrative suggestions of the AVCC Working Party Report and the ACDP Reports, together with the implications of the 'Concerns-Based Adoption Model' would appear to offer guidelines towards effective professional development, encompassing both the needs of the organisation and the individual staff member. These guidelines should be consistent with the staff development priorities expressed in the Dawkins' paper.

## E. Implications for Practice

The Reports of the Vice-Chancellors and the Directors and Principals highlight the importance of academic professional development, along with the need for resources to be committed to practice. The discussion paper of the Minister for Employment, Education and Training links staff development to staff accountability. The need for staff training in distance education is widely recognised and there is a substantial body of literature on which to base it. Thus academic professional development should have a high priority and profile, and yet the diversity of offerings and institutional settings which are involved indicate the difficulty of providing broadly based guidelines for its implementation.

This is supported by the findings of Jacobs (1987), whose survey of the orientation practices among Australian institutions for staff new to distance education found that respondents unanimously believed that orientation programs were necessary for staff new to distance learning and for new course writers. Many of her recommendations stressed the need for further research to determine how this training might best be achieved.

While the details of professional development programs must be particular to each institutional situation, it is evident that these should include a clear policy and clear lines of responsibility, implemented through Heads of Schools and Heads of External Studies Units; and that they should be designed to encompass the concerns and respect the autonomy of academic staff members if they are to be effective.

On the basis of information from the literature, important strategies for successful professional development programs for distance education would appear to require:

- acceptance of the need for staff development activities formalised through an institutional policy and supported by provision of resources (including time) to implement them
- acceptance of responsibility for staff development, probably at Head of School and Head of External Studies Unit level
- a variety of topics relevant to initial and in-service training which relate to the variety of roles performed by staff members

- understanding of the institutional and individual context of a staff development program and knowledge of how to go about it
- the development of individualised and on-going staff development programs, appropriate to the concerns of the individual staff member
- the avoidance of a deficit model of staff development, and of threatening situations
- a co-operative relationship between the staff developer and the staff member, which acknowledges the autonomy of the academic staff member.

## SECTION THREE: Case Study Analysis

### A. Introduction

As explained previously, the case studies gathered information about professional development and distance education from three institutions providing technical and further education (Adelaide College of TAFE, TAFE External Studies College, Western Australia, TAFE Off-Campus Coordinating Authority, Victoria); four Colleges of Advanced Education (Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, South Australian College of Advanced Education, Mitchell College of Advanced Education and Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education); three universities (The University of New England, Curtin University of Technology and Deakin University); and three organisations representing business and industry (an agricultural engineering company; a trading bank and a state electricity commission). For the reasons outlined in Appendix C, the business and industry case studies are not included in this analysis.

In the following sub-sections a global analysis is made of the policies and practices relating to professional development for distance education in the ten educational institutions which were visited, with the intention of identifying the main features of policy and practice which were evident to interviewers and interviewees, and providing some guidelines for future practice. Consequently, both descriptive and evaluative information are included.

Because of the breadth of the concept of 'professional development for distance education' it is perhaps worth noting here that the term seemed typically to be interpreted by those interviewed as referring primarily to the development of skills in relating to students, including the development of 'empathy' involving counselling skills evident in both written and oral communication, as well as writing and technical skills involved in creating the materials and other means for the best possible communication with students. Many did not think consciously about these things as 'staff development' but saw them as just 'part of the job of quality control', a term which was mentioned several times. One interviewer summed up these views by stating:

> "The effectiveness of distance education was seen by the majority not so much in terms of formal staff development, but as a caring response to the needs of students; a sharing of ideas on standards and, to a lesser extent, techniques; a rationalisation of course offerings from within and outside the university; and a clear institutional policy backed by adequate resources."

Consequently, the meaning of professional development as it applies to distance education appeared much less concrete in the interviews than in the literature. Many had not addressed the issue in these terms before - they were evolving their own definitions during the course of the interviews, and while clear links with the literature emerged on reflection, the interviews indicated the tentative and evolutionary nature of the concept in the workplaces of many who are involved in distance education.

### B. Policies and Priorities

Across the range of educational institutions little evidence was given indicating the existence of explicit, written policies on professional development for distance education. This, of course, did not mean that policies did not exist; often they could be seen as an extrapolation of general institutional policy, inferred from institutional practices and/or documents, or personal experience, or detected as an element of institutional philosophy, the difficulty being that it was possible for different policy interpretations to exist within a single institution. It was frequently understood that institutional policy on staff development was that the individual was responsible for his/her own professional development.

## 1. Evidence of an Explicit Policy

Staff at only one of the ten educational institutions mentioned a formal policy document approved by Council and this document expressed an External Studies Policy, not a specific policy about professional development for distance education. However, in its emphasis on production of study materials and other educational support services it provided a framework for both materials production and professional development.

Although a policy document was not mentioned, a commitment to instructional design was referred to as 'policy' by staff of two other institutions: in one it was considered to be accepted and promoted by management and staff; in the second, instructional design was perceived as the professional development model that the institution was about to follow. A fourth institution had attempted to introduce an explicit policy on professional development for distance education when its External Studies Unit was established, but this policy has not been readily acknowledged outside the Unit.

There were other references to 'philosophical commitment' and recognition of staff development 'as a mandate', but awareness was not sufficiently universal to suggest that the views expressed referred to an 'explicit policy'.

## 2. Evidence of an Implicit Policy

In contrast to the above, plentiful evidence was given to suggest that implicit policies regarding professional development for distance education existed, although not always at institutional level. Following are some indications of implicit policy which were reported:

- Care taken in selecting staff to ensure that new staff members had an empathy for and understanding of external studies.
- The existence of a comprehensive manual to guide course development, developed with support from administration.
- Provision of a line management role in formal planning of staff development activities, easing in of new staff, maintaining standards and annual reporting of activities.
- An emphasis on quality control which included the keeping of teaching materials up to date, the availability of technical and editing expertise and the coordination, planning and support of external studies.
- Employment of specialised personnel such as course coordinators, instructional designers, educational technologists whose roles in facilitating materials production were seen as providing for staff development.
- Institutional support for staff to attend conferences, undertake courses, and visit other distance education institutions during Professional Experience Programs
- Use of staff release programs to allow academic staff to work on materials development and/or assist others in this process.
- Activities undertaken by individuals or groups (teachers or managers) to generate interest in the teaching process.
- Inclusion of external course writing and external teaching ability in promotion criteria.
- Appointment of staff specifically to review and improve teaching material and the teaching process.

Thus, an implicit policy to improve and develop staff practice in distance education could be inferred from: the professional approach of many staff members to their tasks; the practices undertaken by individual institutions, or departments within them; and from the availability of resources to improve practice. However, it was also clear, in the general absence of explicit institutional policies, that in many cases the use of available resources for professional development was dependent on the initiative of individual staff members and on their awareness of their availability.

## 3. Communication of Policy

Because of the frequently nebulous nature of institutional policy on professional development for distance education it was difficult to gain a clear picture of how policy is made clear to academics and teachers. Often it appeared to be individually inferred from observation or experience gleaned from the spoken or written word. For example, at one institution a staff member stated that the requirement of involvement in external studies was made very clear to people who were recruited - that it was stated specifically in job advertisements and at interviews. Another stated that things were said at interviews about external studies as part of the college setup, but nothing in terms of "this is our policy; we will expect you to be involved in training programs". A third response to the question was - "the Head of School tells them about it, there's not a written statement anywhere."

However, in many cases, although communication of policy was said to be the responsibility of more senior members of staff, it did not appear to be carried out. Combined with, or as a result of, the lack of explicit policy, communication gaps were mentioned on several occasions as a factor which seriously inhibited professional development for distance education. One interviewee stated that what is needed is an opening up of as many communication channels as possible to keep everybody informed and up-to-date, enthusiastic and forward looking. It was noted, for example, that some departments are more active than others in developing specific programs (workshops and handbooks on evaluation procedures, or computer aided instruction) and that there could be more effort in disseminating such programs across the departments. However a clear policy and clear lines of responsibility for communicating and implementing it, are obviously needed if communication of policy is to occur in a systematic way.

## 4. Factors Affecting the Level of Priority Given to Professional Development for Distance Education.

It might be expected that the level of priority given by an institution to professional development for distance education would have a direct relationship to the clarity of institutional policy in this area; that if policy is clear - priority is high, and vice versa. However, this is not necessarily so. Sometimes the policies and priorities of senior personnel are not reflected in practice. And sometimes practice indicates the existence of a level of priority by individuals or departments of an institution which has developed irrespective of a clear institutional policy.

The level of priority given to professional development in distance education was also often blurred because activities which could be considered as an intrinsic part of it were not recognised as such. For example, one of the TAFE interviewees reported that:

> "To the majority of staff interviewed, the term 'professional development' led to instant comment on the importance of continuing contact with industry and keeping abreast of developments in their fields of expertise.
>
> A little prompting steered discussion towards distance education and it became apparent that many regarded it as the tool whereby they passed on their professional expertise to others, not as professional expertise in itself.

It appeared that they were underestimating themselves as distance educators. Four of the six staff members who were interviewed had been at the College for seven or more years. They had worked as tutors and course writers, and one as a senior administrator, and were deeply involved in the practicalities of their work. Even as they spoke of the importance of staff development in their previous occupational areas, their statements were intrinsically bound up with their responsibilities as distance teachers. 'If we don't keep up with changes in industry, we will fail our students; we have to get the courses right' was a typical comment, indicating that while they were referring to industrial needs, they were relating them almost unconsciously to the practice of distance education. The further the interviews progressed, the more frequently they mentioned things like 'efficient delivery'; 'ways of helping the student'; 'structuring the material so the student can cope'; 'the importance of marking properly'; 'writing comments on students' work'; 'using tapes and visits and new ways to communicate'; 'responding to needs'; 'good standard of writing'; and so on. The words and concepts they used bespoke their professionalism as distance educators, but often as something they had learned as practitioners rather than something they had consciously studied.

Two of those interviewed could not get past this point. They saw things, not incorrectly, from the perspective of the practical needs of their students. Even as they spoke of issues and technologies considered significant in the academic world of distance education, they could not grasp that these things had a professional identity and focus of their own, nor how they could be incorporated in a program of professional development for distance education. The real wealth of information available from these interviewees could not be uncovered in the space of a single interview."

However, the information available obviously indicated that the development of distance education skills was often given a high priority; but just as policies tended to lack explicit expression, so too did priorities; and, in a similar way, there was little evidence to suggest a consistent level of priority between different departments or individuals within an institution.

Factors which were mentioned as affecting the level of priority given to professional development for distance education included the following:

- Staff attitudes - these were particularly important in affecting the degree of priority given to professional development for distance education. Frequently mentioned were:
  - the attitude, described above, that professional expertise is rooted in the educator's discipline, and distance education is only a tool to pass on this expertise.
  - other competing concerns which, given limited time and the lack of perceived rewards associated with the improvement of distance education skills, discouraged their development.
  - the attitude that distance teaching was 'added on' to the internal workload.
- Communication factors - uneven awareness about concerns or activities related to professional development for distance education. These factors, perhaps accentuated by devolution, also affected the level of priority given to it.
- The political climate - the recent emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness, and on 'quality' provision appeared to be making a significant impact on some institutions. Political influences could also have an unsettling effect on priorities, creating a surge of interest which might wane as other priorities emerged.
- Economic factors - limitation or expansion in resources appeared to have a marked effect in inhibiting or promoting professional development activities.

- Historical factors - combined with political and economic issues, these also had an effect on priorities. Expanding areas, such as nursing, which were politically supported and well resourced tended to reflect the entrepreneurial spirit of a new enterprise, whereas institutions or departments which were more established tended to reflect the gloominess of reduced funding, or a feeling by staff that their experience meant that they 'knew it all' - and there was no need for further 'professional development'.

## C. Professional Development Practices

### 1. Levels of Management of Professional Development for Distance Education

The management of professional development activities may be seen as a major factor in determining their success. This section deals with some of the important issues and roles pertaining to this aspect of professional development practice which emerged from the interviews, including the significance of Senior Management, Heads of Departments, Academic Departments, External Studies Units and specifically appointed personnel.

#### I. Senior Management

The interviews suggested that the role of Senior Management is of major importance in directing practice through a clear policy and clearly delegated lines of responsibility. Associated requirements are those of communication, both of information and of support for appropriate activities undertaken by staff and a well developed administrative infrastructure supported by adequate funding.

#### II. Heads of Departments

While responsibility for professional development lies at Directorate level, the role of Heads of Departments was seen as providing academic leadership in this and other areas. In some institutions there were indications that support at this level was not substantial, thereby contributing to the communication gaps referred to earlier, and seriously undermining support for appropriate staff development activities.

The potential of this role in promoting staff development can be seen in the following description by an interviewer of the activities of Heads of Schools at one of the TAFE institutions:

> "Heads of Schools were aware that it was important for existing staff to have new challenges and that professional development needed to be individually tailored and inclusive of lecturers' needs. Heads of Schools are responsible for the overall staff development activities of their staff members. This includes identifying needs and meeting them. Approval for staff development activities occurs through the Head of School and is thus facilitated. The Head of School in this sense has a role of activating and encouraging staff in their endeavours of pursuing staff development.
>
> Heads of Schools are responsible for the quality of learning materials and for making sure that the standard of marking and feedback given to students is of a consistent and appropriate quality. The existence and use of the learning materials manual has a crucial role to play as lecturers are expected to produce high quality materials and use the manual to guide their course development work.

Heads of Schools conduct fortnightly staff meetings, check marking statistics, proof the draft construction of learning materials, organise suitable staff development workshops. Staff meetings help to maintain continuity of development and provide an opportunity for staff to exchange their experiences and expertise. Motivating and encouraging staff is also a major role which Heads of Schools assume. They are keen to offer what is needed by lecturers. For example, distance education experts from overseas and other tertiary institutions who have come to the college to speak or conduct courses for staff have been sought out and encouraged by Heads of Schools. Facilitation of staff development activities such as internal and external courses, technical/industrial leave, and further study were all encouraged and made possible by Heads of Schools.

Heads of Schools perceived their role as one which was fluid and open to change in order to accommodate the needs of lecturers. Individual counselling of lecturers and encouragement for lecturers to be responsible for their own analysis of staff development, and regular reviews, were all employed in order to prepare their staff in distance education. It was important for Heads of Schools to make personal contact with lecturing staff to find out how they were going, what they were working on and have an open discussion about their work. A personal appraisal system existed which included the above discussions."

### III. Academic Departments

When leadership is provided by Heads of Departments, it is usually then delegated to designated staff to provide the expertise needed to foster staff development. Individual institutions adopted different means of achieving this. In the institution referred to above:

> "Senior Lecturers are responsible for final editing of course materials, as well as being members of the course teams which are established to produce new learning materials or update existing materials. In this way it is possible to advise lecturers in areas where they may require assistance. New staff are inducted gradually and their initial tasks include looking after well established courses, where they are assigned a student load. This process also ensures that the same lecturer is available for a group of students. It is an important process where lecturers learn to communicate with students on paper. Some telephone contact is also available. It is the role of Senior Lecturers to coordinate the processes of producing learning materials and their design. Guidance is provided for lecturers seeking advice."

Thus, personal support is important at this level. There was also evidence of informal support provided by peers but this, in general, was not systematised to the extent of becoming part of the management process.

### Iv. External Studies Departments

In most of the institutions surveyed the major thrust, in terms of professional development for distance education, came from the External Studies or Educational Development Departments within them. Officers of these departments were usually responsible for managing the materials production process. There was also often a commitment to staff development activities such as the running of workshops and seminars, providing expertise in terms of technological skills and offering instructional design services. However, despite similarities, approaches varied between institutions. Examples from three institutions follow.

In the first, a TAFE institution, the approach is described in the words of the interviewer:

> "The Department of Educational Development within the College carries much of the responsibility for ongoing professional development. It is a full academic department,

restructured some five years ago to upgrade the quality of course design, technological systems and resource management required by distance education. The department provides specialist instructional designers, or course coordinators, to manage and edit the work of course writers from various content areas. They work with teachers within the College, advising and monitoring the level, pace and structure of learning activities, and the effectiveness of educational communication. They also liaise with technical staff and oversee the materials through to the production stage. With 60 to 80 new courses or major revisions each year, a course coordinator might be responsible for up to 20 courses at any one time.

Course coordinators have to be qualified in educational theory and instructional design; must display literary and editing skills; and must be competent in interpersonal relations. They are expected to keep up with developments in distance education theory and practice and be seen as leaders in innovation.

As well as their work on a one-to-one basis with teachers, they are responsible for disseminating new ideas about distance education throughout the College. Those interviewed all spoke of seminars, meetings and visiting speakers, although not all referred to the same ones. About once a year overseas or interstate visitors are invited to the College to run workshops on specialist distance education issues. Interested staff attend."

- A second institution, from the college sector, was in the process of replacing its External Studies Division with a new resource centre. This will be a major source of expertise in terms of multi-media and educational skills which will be at the disposal of Deans for professional development and other distance education activities.

The administrative role previously provided by the Division of External Studies has been relocated with Registry to allow better focus on resource development and a particular aim is to upgrade the role of instructional designers to work with academics in the Schools. The increased focus on instructional design is the model that the college intends to follow for professional development of academics working in distance education.

- In contrast, the External Studies Department at one of the universities visited is basically a division for enrolment and support of students, record keeping, and distribution and collection of course materials. The interviewer described its role as follows:

"The Centre staff, with the exception of the Head and a half-time instructional designer, are employed as administrative or clerical staff. They run a highly computerised record keeping system, with up-to-date details on enrolments, mailings, dates of assignments received and returned, marks, course status and students' progress through their courses. They also keep master copies of print materials and course details on disk for word processing, audio tapes and other media. They liaise with Printing Services, the Library, Educational Media Centre and the Educational Development Unit, and with academic staff involved in the production and coordination of courses and units. The Centre employs a staff of ten.

The Centre is funded separately from the Schools and has no control over the external studies activities of academics. To a large extent the Centre must depend on the interest and goodwill of academics to respond positively to the services and workshops offered. It was remarked that there are academics who have worked with external courses for years and have had very little contact with the Centre. Others are regular users of workshops, teleconference facilities, instructional design services, and are constantly involved in the writing or improvement of their courses.

Other staff development activities are run by the Centre, often at the request of a specific School. The School of Nursing recently requested a training session on teleconferencing, and sent eight staff. An interstate visitor ran a series of one day

teletutorial workshops last year and attracted good attendances. A campus of the institution is presently setting up a new external degree course, and Centre staff have spent several days there running workshops and discussion groups. The instructional design and editing services are called upon by individuals and groups, and the Centre believes that academic staff learn a lot about distance education by working closely with such people. It is planned that another instructional designer will be employed soon by the Educational Development Unit, and his/her services will be shared with the Centre for External Studies.

The philosophy of the Centre is practical and pragmatic and this approach pervades its approach to academic staff development. There is very little research into distance education within the Centre or in the Schools, and what there is, is mainly administrative or procedural."

The situation within the above department, in relation to staff development, reflected commonly expressed problems in managing a service which was not always wanted by academics. Experience in a number of institutions suggested that a delicate relationship existed between Educational Support Centres and Academic Schools/Departments. Where the former were seen to be imposing activities on academic staff, then the activities tended to be less successful than those that involved a side-by-side relationship as consultors.

### v. Specialised Staff Appointments

Frequently it was staff who had been appointed to perform particular developmental activities, who had a notable impact. Titles varied between institutions but some examples will illustrate -

* Instructional designers in a number of institutions worked with a team of academics, or with individuals, to develop teaching materials. In the words of an academic from one of the universities:

> "She takes what often is the raw product - lectures which might have been prepared for internal courses without much regard for educational packaging - and she advises on how they should be tailored to suit the needs of external students. She can assess materials, and advise how to improve them."

These educational developers tended to be valued highly and, given the one-to-one nature of their work, the main problem was that there were not enough of them.

* Course coordinators at a TAFE institution fulfilled an instructional design role by the nature of their work:

> "The course coordinators are responsible for course development. Each is given a number of subject areas and expected to develop or redevelop two and a half to three semester subjects per year. In performing this role course coordinators, along with an educational technologist, have an ongoing function in providing professional development activities for writers and teachers. Most course coordinators now see themselves primarily as instructional designers and they have been responding to an increasing demand to run workshops and activities on instructional design and related activities.
>
> Writers are either recruited from the ranks of the teaching staff or employed from outside the system. They write the study material under the supervision of the course coordinators. A new writer is helped by a course coordinator and given whatever assistance is needed, including samples of existing material. Consequently the relationship between course coordinator and writer contains an intrinsic and ongoing professional development component."

- A Course Development Officer had been appointed to the External Studies Department at one university to give impetus to course materials development and offer advice to members of staff about their academic teaching. He had initiated a number of activities, some of which are described in a following sub-section, to raise staff awareness about teaching at a distance.

- External Studies Materials Development Officers were academic staff members who were released at one of the colleges to work on materials and act as a role model for others.

Other support staff, who also had a role in staff development, existed at various institutions. 'Education Officers' were employed in one college to help facilitate the teaching process. The interviewer concerned described the role as follows:

> "The job varies, but it involves being a channel of communication between external students and the staff. When courses are operating it involves helping to administer the system, searching out the academic staff and making sure they are working to time, that things are up to schedule - acting as a facilitator. These people are regarded by instructional designers as assistants but, in effect, by academics they are often perceived as major members of staff from the Division. So it is both the instructional designers and the Education Officers who are important in providing information."

A similar part is played by 'Course Assistants' at one of the universities. Again, the interviewer described the role:

> "They are located all over the University - some are in the Distance Education Unit and some in the Schools. They are people who effectively support the course teams, provide administrative support, the people who grease the wheels of the course design process. And they are universally regarded as very valuable people.
>
> In a formal sense these Course Assistants are not seen as providing advice to staff about their teaching, but in practical terms they certainly provide a lot of assistance to staff in this process. So they would have to be regarded in some sense as an integral part of the University's attempts to provide assistance for staff in their professional development with regard to distance education."

Consequently, the management of professional development relating to distance education occurs at different levels and in different forms, and with varying degrees of effectiveness, across the institutions which were studied. The forms are often idiosyncratic to particular institutions and yet there are many common elements - and common problems. Some of the latter are discussed briefly, in general terms, below.

### vi. Problems In Establishing Effective Management

Problems inhibiting the effective management of professional development for distance education appeared to derive from two main kinds of situations: firstly, from those situations where staff in management roles gave little attention to it and so practices were 'piecemeal', 'ad hoc' and lacking in organisation; and secondly, from those situations where professional development opportunities were provided, but were met with apathy or resistance.

Both these situations arose from a number of causes and the existence of 'hidden agendas' makes the extent of some of them difficult to define. However, the causes could be considered in two categories: those related to institutional policies and priorities and associated with internal and

external developments and resources, and those stemming from attitudes of staff, both at the senior personnel level of commitment, organisation and communication to a variety of motivational factors affecting academic staff. Perhaps notable here is the perception that some practices offer little reward given the time and competition from other academic interests, or the passive involvement offered to staff rather than direct and obviously beneficial participation. Some practices may appear threatening to the autonomy of academics who feel confident and 'expert' in their own activities and who have no patience with the perceived concept of imposed staff training exercises.

Thus, some of the main beliefs and attitudes resulting in staff resistance or apathy appeared to be:

- The belief that preparation of educational materials must be content driven; that content and teaching strategies cannot be separated, and that the 'better product' which may result from modification of teaching materials by distance education specialists, may be less useful in the teaching process.

- The concern that increasing the number of people in the distance education administrative process places at risk the teacher/student relationship.

- The belief that the professional development priority is in an academic's own discipline and that, given the extent of academic workload, there is no time for involvement in areas of secondary interest, such as distance education.

- The view that professional development is planned by, and administrative deadlines imposed by, people outside the Schools who, it is perceived, have no appreciation of the academic's workload and range of commitments.

- The perception that running workshops and seminars across Schools fails to meet the specific needs of different disciplines, and that they are generally run by people who are not entitled to the respect of the academics because they are not part of the direct teaching process.

- The feeling that people who have been teaching externally for many years are experts in the field and have a track record to prove it.

Consequently, these shortcomings in the relationship between administrators (including members of External Studies Units) and academics are particularly important in inhibiting effective staff development practices.

The following sub-sections describe some of the common - and effective (from the point of view of interviewees or interviewers) - professional development practices that are used in the institutions visited.

## 2. Induction

Three main forms of induction were mentioned: the short induction program/activity which provided a general overview of the institution and of external studies facilities, practices and staffing; a more extensive but informal form of induction provided through on-the-job training; and there was one instance of a quite highly developed Orientation Program, designed to be undertaken in the distance education mode.

Examples and evaluative comments relating to each of the above follow. In addition, many institutions also offered resources in terms of personnel, handbooks and exemplary materials which could be used for induction or ongoing professional development, and these are included in the following sub-section.

### I. The Short Induction Program/Activity

This was the most typical form of induction activity. Two of the colleges which offered this kind of program both did so through their External Studies Units. At one, the program consists of half a day's introduction to External Studies staff and to practices involved in the preparation of external teaching material. At the second, an orientation activity is carried out by the Director of the External Studies Unit, or his representative, who, after being notified by the personnel office when new staff members arrive, invites them to the department to talk about relevant issues, shows them through the facility and introduces members of the External Studies staff.

Staff of both institutions felt that these activities were worth developing further, with the possibility of attendance being made compulsory. In general, centralised provision of induction activities seemed acceptable to academic staff who object to the role of the External Studies Unit in other ongoing professional development activities.

Examples of short, personalised induction programs were seen in the induction practices of one of the TAFE bodies. Course coordinators undertake such a program when they are first employed to familiarise them with the organisation and develop their skills as instructional designers. New tutors experience a personal interview with a Liaison Officer which is tailored to individual needs. If a tutor seems deficient in the area of distance education, suggested readings and other advice are offered. This personal interview is also supported by a more general induction activity in the form of a meeting held at the beginning of each year when tutors are given general guidelines about their responsibilities. Informal induction activities were felt to be quite appropriate for permanent staff as peer advice and support were readily available. However, there was some feeling by permanent staff that the contract staff, particularly tutors with no experience in teaching, required more than was provided. But this would be difficult to enforce as tutors are often busy in their own occupations, see themselves as peripheral to the system, and are not motivated by any significant reward.

### II. On-the-job Training

Many interviewees recorded that a lot of informal 'on the job' training does take place as academics exchanged experiences. However this was rarely recorded as systematic. One interviewer described a well-developed example of this form of induction which was felt by the Head of School interviewed to be very effective. At this institution it was seen to be most important that new lecturing staff be given an understanding of external studies:

> "This includes a knowledge of how the system operates, how to develop courses and evaluate them, and the day to day running of the School. Much of the knowledge becomes relevant when staff are actually involved in all of these areas. Staff development thus is a carefully supervised process of on the job training and support provided by other staff and the Senior Lecturer responsible for their line management.
>
> New lecturers develop professionally through experience and student feedback. The expertise gained is mainly in the development of suitable materials, predominantly in print and supplemented by visual and electronic media. This situation arises as new staff are recruited for their technical expertise rather than external studies. Clearly the main emphasis is on becoming familiar and expert in working externally, and hence staff development has concentrated in this area.
>
> Consequently new lecturing staff are eased in slowly. They generally begin with teaching responsibilities and counselling of existing and prospective students. Preparation for teaching in distance education is simply not a case of just marking essays. Student assignments require detailed answer sheets, notes on problem areas of the syllabus. The need to establish and maintain contact with the student is stressed.

The lecturer's involvement with course planning and production comes a few months after arrival at the College. Here the course manual is used as a reference and it is rare for the new lecturer to work alone. Rather course teams are used and provide the opportunity for the new lecturer to work with experienced lecturers. Here all aspects of course planning are encountered from the course proposal (if it is a new course) through to the layout and writing of the course. Evaluations occur on the initial chapters. In short every aspect of the course is discussed in this process.

The individual approach is time consuming; however, it has the advantage of providing one-to-one support and gradual development for the new lecturer. It was also noted that new lecturers quickly adapt to the system with such a supportive environment within which to work.

New lecturers worked with an experienced Senior Lecturer. Together they would cover editing, proofing, drafting, all of the stages involved in the development of course materials. It was essentially a broad lateral approach to give a thorough understanding of distance education. Management had found that working with more experienced staff was an effective and efficient way of achieving this aim."

### III. A Formal Orientation Program:

A staff member at one of the colleges suggested that it would be a good idea to require staff to undertake a course of study by distance education before they write material of their own: not necessarily a formal orientation course, but one possibly outside their own discipline so that they become better aware of the need 'to come down to the level you have to come down to'.

One TAFE institution had already initiated a formal orientation course by distance education - a concept which would appear to offer many advantages in providing direct experience of relevant issues. But it has not been without its problems. The course, and some of these problems which have limited its success, are described, in the words of the interviewer, below:

"New lecturers enrol and study in this program as external students. It is expected to take 30 hours and until this year study time was made available from the staff's workload. Administrative changes from the beginning of 1987 however, meant that the course must now be done in DOTT time (duties other than teaching) which is fixed at eight hours a week.

The format follows the one used in the College's External Studies courses. There is a study guide in five parts, with each part divided into manageable units of work. Written assignments are set at the end of each of the five Sections. The package also includes a book of Readings and an envelope of printed resources, mainly official College forms and stationery that lecturers will use in their work.

The course begins with a half day seminar, at which new lecturers are addressed by the Principal and senior staff, then taken on a tour of the College to familiarise them with specialised areas like the printery, despatch and the audio-visual centre.

The content of the course covers theory, procedures and practical issues in distance teaching and learning. It is written in a friendly, conversational style.

Assignments are submitted to a tutor for marking and comment. The tutor is a colleague attached to the Education Development Department within the College. Feedback sheets are completed at the end of each section also, so that the tutor can get continuous evaluation on the course. It was originally intended that formative evaluation would improve the course from year to year to make it as effective and relevant as possible. Self help, in-text questions and other learning strategies are included and their uses explained to the reader.

The book of Readings contains distance education research and literature, and is supplemented by extensive reference to materials in the library so that new lecturers become aware of the leading writers in the field, the journals, and the various professional organisations. The text encourages new lecturers to think about writing in the field of distance education teaching.

The Orientation Program was written some years ago by an instructional designer in the Education Development Department as part of the requirements for her Master of Education degree. It was thoroughly researched, carefully written and edited and, at the time of writing, up to date. It consists of a comprehensive coverage of the main issues of distance education and their practical application. It also provides a model of course writing and organisation which new course writers can follow until they are experienced enough to develop their own style.

With approximately fifteen new staff appointed to the College each year, it is a cost-effective method of induction, and an efficient way of ensuring that the policy and philosophy of the College, and a number of important distance education issues, are formally presented to staff in the first few weeks of employment.

The Orientation Program focuses on the professional development of the new lecturer. It gives guidance on communicating with students, an awareness of the field of distance education, and some practice at judging the quality and appropriateness of course materials. While the value of the Orientation Program is clear, it is reduced in effectiveness because of a number of problems.

It is offered at the beginning of the year, but not all lecturers take up new appointments at that time. Some also are appointed on fixed-term contracts to perform specific tasks and then leave. Some are part-time lecturers, tutors and markers.

There have been examples of staff resistance and some do not finish because they just do not get around to it. The current tutor reports twelve enrolments in 1987, but five have not yet submitted their final assignments. There is supposed to be an end-of-course evaluation session, but this has been put off this year because of other priorities and had not been held by late September. The tutor could not identify a simple reason:

> 'The course is supposed to be compulsory, but you can't make them do it. I think they all intend to complete, but they become busy with other things. There may not be enough support from Heads of Departments, but then their business is running their courses, getting papers marked and revising materials ...'

Part of this problem lies in the regulations about working hours which were introduced at the beginning of the year. Everybody speaks of being under pressure at the moment, and new lecturers, given their 40 assignments a week to mark, understandably make these their first priority. Another reason could stem from the course's newness in the system. While the majority of staff have not done it, it is difficult to enforce it as a compulsory qualification for the job. It does not carry an award, nor is it portable outside the College.

All agreed that initial training and subsequent upgrading were needed in distance education and, while they believed that what was already happening was 'quite good' and 'fairly impressive', most agreed there was still room for improvement. Conditions set by the governing body were frequently criticised, especially the control over working hours. 'Extra training time is essential'; 'Having to do the Orientation Program in their own time is detrimental'; 'People must be given release time to update'. One suggested that the initial induction course could easily be expanded to take three months full time, and the increased expenditure could be justified by the earlier efficiency of staff which would result."

## 3. Ongoing Professional Development

A great variety of activities and facilities were mentioned as providing for ongoing professional development in distance education, but implementation was often described as 'ad hoc' or 'piecemeal' and staff frequently did not avail themselves of the opportunities offered. Some activities were clearly more effective than others. This section describes the common forms of staff development as well as some of the more effective activities which have been introduced in various institutions:

### I. Common Staff Development Activities

#### a) Workshops and Seminars

All institutions provide some in-service activities of this kind on a regular or irregular basis. They are usually run by staff of the External Studies Units either on request or from their own initiative.

For example, one interviewer described how a university External Studies Unit runs its workshops:

> "The Unit runs a half-day workshop in distance education at least once a semester. It is meant for new and ongoing staff working with external students. It aims to explain the role of the Unit so that lecturers understand the day-to-day mechanisms of handling assignments, record keeping, taking messages and so on, as well as the broader functions of course preparation and delivery. It also addresses the role of the external tutor in marking assignments and dealing with students. It deals fairly extensively with course writing, giving guidance on house style and the kind of assistance available from the Unit for developing good course materials. Practical aspects of distance education such as alternative methods of communicating with isolated students, the importance of prompt turn-around time, common student problems and expectations are also discussed."

Another interviewer reported:

> "The workshop is the one regular and formal development exercise offered by the institution. The Unit believes it should be regarded seriously by all external teachers. It is considered an effective and useful activity and Unit staff speak of excellent feedback from people who have attended. It is advertised in advance in the staff *Weekly Bulletin* and letters are also sent to Heads of Schools asking them to notify their staff and encourage attendance."

Less success with other regular activities was generally reported and rather small attendances were typical. For example, one institution offers about 40 professional development activities a year, but these are not well attended. Workshops are frequently offered at various institutions on specific topics such as editing, desktop publishing, keyboard mastery or teleconferencing, but attendance is small and the throwaway line is that 'the only people who turn up are those who don't need to go to such things'.

The above interviewer's report further illustrates this:

> "Numbers at workshops/seminars are usually small with no more than 10 to 20 percent of those involved in distance education present on any occasion. Several such workshops were advertised last semester, offered separately to the four major Divisions within the University. The Divisional focus, however, did not significantly increase participation. Many distance educators have never attended a staff development workshop and there is no compulsion to do so."

**b) Print Resources (handbooks, brochures, handouts, information packages, newsletters, exemplary course materials)**

The written word provides another common means of facilitating professional development in distance education, the success of which appears to be determined by the content and/or the way the material is used.

For example in the half-day workshops described earlier, the Unit appears to use print well in advertising and as a resource in the workshops themselves:

> "A package of materials is given to each participant, including selected examples of Unit Guides, Study Manuals and books of Readings. These, it is hoped, will be used as models to help people putting together new or revised course material. The package also includes official forms and stationery used either by students or the External Studies Unit, indicating the way student records are collected and stored. There are booklets on teleconferencing, library services and a student handbook. It is a comprehensive and useful package for a lecturer wanting to discover how distance education operates at the Institution."

Handbooks are available at many institutions and are potentially valuable as a permanent resource, although their value depends on whether they are kept up to date and the extent to which they are used. An example of this comes from the TAFE institution which offers the Orientation Program described previously:

> "The handbook, *Guide to the Writing of Distance Education Materials*, is made available to all staff involved in course writing and maintenance. When a lecturer comes to write a new course or subject, he or she may attend a seminar based on the handbook. The seminar is possibly more significant in staff development than the handbook, because it draws attention to problem areas and emphasises the important points, but the handbook remains the property of the lecturer, and is available for constant reference if necessary. The handbook gives guidance on format, terminology and techniques and gives examples of these from various existing courses.
>
> The handbook is four years old and, according to the interviewee from the Educational Development Department, 'needs updating to include new ideas and more recent experiments'. One interviewee claimed not to know of the handbook, and two others were not able to distinguish their memory of it specifically from other manuals and guides produced in individual departments. One claimed, 'We all abide by it and at times we have to advise staff on it', but he could not comment on details. Another acknowledged its existence, but said, 'It isn't used too much; we mainly learn by word of mouth, or assisting each other'. It exists as a resource and all staff have access to it, but it doesn't appear to have the same potential impact on professional development as the Orientation Program has."

Similar reservations about handbooks were expressed in other institutions. In one college it is available to staff but is little used and is not distributed - it is now only provided by the External Studies Unit after face-to-face consultation about a topic to which it refers. In another college there is a loose-leaf handbook which has the advantage of allowing for regular updating 'in the light of the experience of using it'. This is provided for staff to 'take away and read' but there is no guarantee that they will do so.

The above TAFE institution also publishes a Technology Newsletter produced by the Education Development Department and distributed free both in and outside the college:

> "This contains information on new courses and new ideas being tried in the College, articles on new technological developments, and short reviews of journals and books which have arrived in the library. In addition, exemplary course materials produced in the College are now being sent to all departments as well as to the Library. It is hoped that they will be consulted by any staff involved in course writing to encourage them to try new and better ideas."

Another interviewer explained how this latter approach has also been adopted by the Course Development Officer at one of the universities:

> "He has taken the attitude that there is no way he can do anything more than provide a start for people. To this end he has built on a long-standing tradition of the Department of External Studies, which is to give all new staff samples of the kinds of materials that have been produced and emphasise expectations. He believes there is something of use in that process. He has been moving very quickly to change the emphasis of the sorts of things that people receive and he has developed a package of what he considers to be model materials. The package in itself is a good example of course material practice in external studies. As the first element of his staff development process, all new members of staff receive this package."

Another TAFE institution makes a particular effort each year to provide information for tutors through brochures, handouts, wall posters, and a Tutor's Manual is sent out which contains procedures, information and advice about student support. A Tutor Development Package has been prepared to form the basis of a workshop, but as attendance is voluntary and often small, the value of the resource itself is minimised. As with the handbooks, the success of these forms of information is difficult to judge, but at least staff have access to it. However, it was frequently felt that there was more value if these print resources were used to complement other staff development activities. On their own, they appear to be considered to have little value.

### c) Individual and Peer Development

Individual and peer development can be regarded as playing an extensive though often unrecognised role in professional development in all the institutions studied. These were mentioned at both an explicit and an implicit level.

Some of the forms of personal and peer development which were explicitly mentioned were:

- exchange of ideas at regular staff and Board of Studies meetings
- sharing and discussing articles in journals and monographs
- contact with professionals outside the institution with visits to colleagues in other distance education institutions, exchange of materials and attendance at conferences
- working in a distance education institution within a Professional Experience Program
- enrolment in courses such as the South Australian Graduate Diploma in Distance Education

Perhaps more important was individual and peer development at the implicit level. While it is impossible to measure the extent of this form of development, the variety of individual activities mentioned and the degree of peer exchange - which provides for another form of modelling in addition to the use of model materials mentioned earlier - suggested that the professional and social context of the institution plays a vital part in the growth of the individual. Several spoke of the importance of modelling as a method of staff development. For example:

> "People learn from each other - from their seniors; from the person sitting at the desk next to them; they overhear their colleagues speaking to students on the telephone; and they exchange stories of their day-to-day experiences during lunch and coffee breaks. Around them all the time the practices and values of distance education are being demonstrated, discussed, analysed and criticised. There can be little doubt of the effectiveness of such a hot house environment as an ongoing method of professional staff development."

The value of experience was evident - and the tendency for it to be unrecognised as professional development. One staff member had been at her college for eleven years and was regarded by her colleagues as innovative, efficient and enthusiastic. Initially she struggled with the concept:

> "I find it very hard to separate the development of distance education teaching from our responsibilities to our students."

Then it occurred to her that her eleven years experience had been her professional development and that the most effective assistance she could give to a new or less experienced distance educator was the richness of the discoveries she had made for herself. Her comments tell their own story:

> "I didn't have any in-service course in distance education. I learned things from another lecturer who was here when I arrived ... and a bit by trial and error. It takes some years to get it right. But unless you can write a course and have your students work that course, you don't know where the pitfalls are or where you went wrong ... that takes another year ... to know how much to put in a lesson, and how much you want the student to send back to you. It comes back to experience really. Putting the course on to paper is the main difficulty ... that is what has to be learnt. Practice, experience, are the best teachers. Nobody is actually saying these things to us. I automatically think distance education and this enables me to expand my way of doing things."

Another staff member emphasised the need for experience to learn the essentials of the job properly. 'It takes two years or more to become proficient', he said. A third claimed that professional expertise in distance education is an 'evolving thing':

> "At first we might learn by modelling, but there must always be scope for flexibility and change. Training can't give that."

They agreed that distance education is a specialist area and that staff had to learn how to do it, but only two interviewees at this college were conscious of professional development as a concept distinct from learning by experience.

An emphasis on experience as professional development also came from other institutions, one interviewee stressing that the development of distance education materials and keeping these up to date, accurate delivery, and marketing are an intrinsic part of staff development, and another that the function of specialist staff such as instructional designers working with academic staff also illustrates this intrinsic staff development component.

Thus, experience as professional development has a potentially pervasive effect which is utilised in some of the effective staff development activities described below, particularly those which encourage academic staff involvement in the materials production process.

## II. Some Effective Staff Development Activities

This section outlines some staff development activities which were considered valuable in terms of professional development for distance education.

### a) The Course Team Approach

The Open University model, involving a team approach to course development, was adopted at only one institution which recognised it as also being an invaluable staff development tool. However, in practice its use appeared to be limited for a complexity of reasons, but mainly because academics are accustomed to being responsible for their teaching programs and it is outside their experience and tradition to write their courses well in advance in a language of 'guided didactic conversation', and accept peer comment and criticism about their teaching.

Nonetheless many recognised that some form of joint collaboration in course development with other academic colleagues both from within and outside their institution, together with professionals from printing, editorial, graphic design and instructional development (even though lengthy and at times painful) was of considerable value in developing quality course materials.

The model of each and every academic developing his/her own study guides at each and every institution across the country was recognised as having yielded many mediocre materials which probably has contributed to the high dropout and low graduation rates in distance education. The main argument against some form of joint collaboration or course team approach to develop and write external courses was that it took a lot of resources, including energy and time.

### b) Educational Development/Instructional Design

A modified form of the course team or of course collaboration is the use of educational developers (or persons filling an equivalent or similar function, such as instructional designers, course coordinators or educational technologists), either within teams or working individually with staff members. This practice has the potential for significant impact on professional development for distance education, given that it is already in use in several institutions and is acknowledged to be directly productive and capable of influencing more people than would attend workshops and seminars.

An interviewer described this "instructional design" model in practice in one college:

> "It has emphasised the production side of course materials, and a lot of effort has been put into setting up a style that helps to drive the teaching process. The aim is for each course to have its own instructional designer. It is the instructional designer's job to provide advice on how the teaching should occur. The designers see themselves as having to develop instructional design which is not something that existed before they arrived; so they see themselves in a frontier enterprise. They are aware that the model exists overseas, and in many ways they are importers of models of education. Many of the instructional designers are people who have come from teaching backgrounds, although at this stage it is necessary to employ many from some other background and then to give them further training in instructional design. It is hoped in the future that staff will have already received appropriate professional training at a college or university."

At another college, two instructional designers work individually with academics in two of the Schools. The instructional designer, working through the Dean of School, is attached to, and therefore develops allegiance to, a particular School, thereby avoiding the 'them' and 'us' conflicts which can occur when staff work out of External Studies Units. Senior management at this institution considers that the implementation of professional development through instructional designers is the 'best way to go', recognising that this should continue to take place through the Deans.

However, there are problems associated with the use of instructional designers. From the point of view of the External Studies Unit there are 'not enough to go around' given the one-to-one or small group nature of their work. Some institutions which use this model have only one instructional designer. And from the academics' viewpoint instructional design implies that teaching is driven by distance education techniques outside the discipline being taught. The potential conflict between designer and teacher can be aggravated when Schools see the prospect of appointing more instructional designers to academic posts. The dilemma occurs because teachers perceive that academic positions are for teaching and the increase of instructional designers in academic positions appears to imply that the teaching function is being deprived. Of course instructional designers argue that this is not so and rather that they, in fact, enhance the teaching function. But in days of dwindling resources this debate can easily widen the gulf between academic Schools and External Studies Units.

### c) Targeting and Release of Academic Staff

A practice which appears to have been used successfully in at least two institutions - a college and a university - is that of 'targeting' academic staff who have shown interest in the teaching process and gaining their involvement in specific projects, or providing funds to allow that staff member to work in the External Studies Unit part-time. At the college referred to above, the emphasis is very much on providing experience of the materials production process. In the words of the interviewer:

> "They invite an academic to come in as a channel of communication between the School and the External Studies Unit, which sees itself as facilitating the production of materials and the supervision of student support systems and so on. That person is educated to the ways of the Unit then goes back to educate his or her colleagues."

The interview described a member of the academic staff who had been through this process:

> "She had come into academia after a short experience in business as an accountant. She wanted to be a teacher and took a job at the College and, as is often the case with young teachers, she was thrown the difficult work to do. Not only was she going to teach hundreds of introductory students on-campus but she had some off-campus work as well. She did not know anything about it but gained some assistance from her colleagues, the old hands, who said 'this is the way we do it'. She is one whom some would regard as a born teacher. She is well organised, very enthusiastic and committed. So she was targeted by the External Studies Unit. They could see through their largely practical dealings with her that she was the sort of person who could provide a leap forward and convince her colleagues that is was an effective way to work. In effect that is what she did. She was the basic liaison person between her school and the unit which provided her with all sorts of advice on how to put her materials together, how to design the course, how to get through to students.
>
> The philosophy of the Distance Education Unit hinges around the idea of maximising dialogue between the students and their teachers. It favours well developed printed materials that speak directly to the student and that reflect the teacher's own interests and personality. For example, most staff write a letter of introduction to their students. It regards those sorts of simple exercises as a great leap forward. Its whole approach is 'how do we convince people who are working in a dual mode institution that external studies is not just adapting on-campus education in a fairly haphazard way to the external mode?' The academic staff member described above is able to appreciate those sorts of distinctions, practise them, and so enhance credibility with her colleagues. It is made clear to all concerned that those academic staff who are involved with the Unit are not puppets: they are autonomous people whose aim is to try to help develop the whole teaching group, not just the one person, through using this process."

The Course Development Officer at the university which uses this approach has developed a similar technique:

> "In other words to identify members of staff who appear to be interested in the sorts of resources that we can offer and then to offer these people these resources. To do this we have developed various schemes. A successful example is an interactive radio broadcast scheme, whereby some radio people in the state capital use a series of FM broadcast stations and the talkback radio process for academic staff to provide a broadcast, according to a timetable. Students and anyone else in the community are able to listen and at various stages in the broadcast they go to talkback and a panel of people at the institution can speak to anyone who is in the listening radius of the radio station. This is all coordinated from the state capital city. Quite a lot of the academic staff have become involved in the exercise and it is an example of the way in which we will proceed: in other words we will come up with interesting ideas, in terms of new teaching techniques,

and then attempt to get a group of people involved. When success occurs, as it has in the radio scheme, it is then publicised throughout the university as a wonderful success, with the implication: 'Would you like to be part of it?'

We are also just beginning to employ another scheme whereby departments are provided with funds that will allow them to release a member of staff to give that member of staff time to produce course materials. One or two people have been through that scheme."

### d) External Studies Unit Involvement in Course Accreditation and Reaccreditation

This is another feature of practice at a college which External Studies staff regard as successful:

"A key part of the External Studies policy allows a representative of the External Studies Unit to be on each course accreditation and reaccreditation committee. This is regarded by External Studies staff as of fundamental importance both for materials production and professional development.

This accreditation mechanism allows the External Studies personnel to raise questions at the level of course planning such as - 'well how is it going to be done externally?' This is regarded as extremely useful. So often they begin by asking those people who are going to produce a new course, or reaccredit (adapt) existing courses, 'what are you proposing to do about external studies?' At this bedrock stage they believe they achieve a lot in terms of staff development."

### e) Other Effective Practices

Other practices mentioned as potentially or actually significant were:

- the use of a university or college forum under the sponsorship of the Vice Chancellor or Director dealing with issues related to distance teaching
- providing opportunities to share new ideas, practices or experiences through meetings of innovative course developers, and conducting activities to disseminate information after attending conferences.
- the development of procedures based on cost effectiveness, rationalisation, coordination and efficient compromises, along with educational effectiveness: in other words, a business and marketing approach.

## SECTION FOUR: Conclusions and Recommendations

### A. Fulfilment of Aim

The project fulfilled its aim of seeking out policies and practices currently in use to prepare academic staff to develop, write and teach in distance education. It was posssible to identify some effective practices which have been implemented or considered in a number of Australian post secondary institutions. Some resulting recommendations, based on a consideration of both the literature and the case studies, are included in this section. However, for reasons which emerged during the implementation of the project, and which are outlined again below, it was not possible to delineate a single detailed model which, given the diverse characteristics of distance education providers in Australia, could be transported without modification between institutions. The recommendations resulting from this study are, consequently, broad: they are intended to articulate the conditions which providers would need to move toward, before a more detailed model, adapted to Australian conditions, could emerge.

But given the importance of professional development as outlined by the Vice-Chancellors, the Principals and Directors of Colleges and the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, it should not be beyond higher education institutions, which have as their mission training and education, to develop and implement an effective series of professional development policies and practices. To the outsider it appears but another case of the physicians being called upon to heal themselves.

The established and trouble-free distance education practices in business and industry, as noted in Appendix C, show that when staff training is accepted by management and staff as a condition of employment it contributes in a businesslike way to the functioning of the organisation.

### B. Procedures

Before concluding with a consideration of these recommendations, it seems pertinent to comment on the procedures used in this project. Considerable time and effort were spent in developing procedures, and in implementing the project in accordance with them. While this emphasis was vital in providing a structure for the project, the information derived was disappointingly unstructured, and this appeared to reflect the idiosyncratic, and often embryonic nature, of professional development practice in distance education in Australia. It also meant that:

- some of the specific objectives which were intended to support the broad aims were not satisfactorily met. For example detailed information about the staff development needs of support staff, as compared to academic staff, and even the specific skills which need to be included in a professional development program for distance education were not clearly identified. The limited value of the information derived from business and industry, is a further example of an objective which was inadequately met.

- the sampling procedure did not provide discrete data which could be distinctively related to the criteria which were developed. For example, the state, sector, size or location of an institution appeared to have little bearing on the nature of professional development provision for distance education. Where age had some effect, it was often to entrench opposition to it. However, it can be said that because of the effort made to survey a representative sample of Australian distance education providers, the kind of information which resulted may be seen as a reliable indication of the state of professional development for distance education in Australia, apart from any further idiosyncratic exceptions.

- the case studies themselves and the data which resulted from the survey were difficult to categorise beyond identifying the broad themes which have been included in this report. However, as indicated earlier, to try and capture some of the first hand information which emerged from the case studies, several lengthy quotes have been included in the report.

While acknowledging the limitations which were consequently imposed on the results of the study, it can be argued that this is not so much a reflection on the procedures used, but rather the virtually inevitable result of a preliminary investigation within an area which itself lacks tradition and definition.

It is also a result of the tradition of academic freedom and autonomy which has led to the circumstance that academic professional development in any area, not just in distance education, does not have a high priority and profile. Now that this new priority has been set by the political agenda, which requires staff accountability and recommends resources to support it, there should be stimulation of activities, policies and practices.

It is hoped that this study will assist in contributing to the improvement of professional development for distance education by encouraging a movement towards some definition of possible requirements, and that future studies will be able to report on a more firmly developing area, featuring the emergence of more sophisticated techniques, adapted to the requirements of Australian conditions.

## C. The Context of the Recommendations

There remains considerable debate as to whether distance education is a discrete academic discipline in its own right. However, there is no debate that distance education is a specialised mode of delivery and that some academic professional development is important for all academics who enter this area of off-campus teaching. It is with some regret that this project did not identify some simple, specific guidelines for effective professional development practices to prepare academics for distance education. Teaching off-campus successfully is a complex task and various models appear to suit different institutions and different disciplines and different academics. No single optimum model has yet emerged, although there are important indications of some of the requirements such a model should meet.

The literature on academic professional development points out the importance of maximising the professional expertise of staff and assisting them to adapt to change. The reports of both the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee and the Australian College of Directors and Principals stress that academic professional development is not a privilege, but an integral part of a staff member's duties. The literature also points out that academic professional development is a process in which the professional aspirations of the individual and the mission of the institution are brought into congruence to improve the institution's effectiveness and to enhance the level of staff satisfaction.

The Federal Government's Green Paper on Higher Education links academic professional development with staff assessment procedures and argues that accountability of staff must be balanced by adequate professional development opportunities. The Green Paper talks about the expansion of institutional activity in this area. It argues for an adequate flow of funds for staff assessment and also for the provision of development and training activities which are to effect a process of maintenance of each institution's most valuable human resource, and it highlights the need for innovative programs for professional development to make more use of staff and to take advantage of the more flexible staffing arrangements that the Government hopes to implement.

It has been noted that there is a degree of tension between academic Schools and External Studies Units and also a degree of tension between the need of academics to give their time to develop their own discipline rather than distance education activities. These tensions are undoubtedly real and strongly felt among many even though they rarely surface. Nevertheless, these tensions are part of the reason that academic professional development activities organised by External Studies Units

are so poorly attended. The ideal of academic professional development is a sensitive collaboration between External Studies Units and Schools to support staff who are identified as needing to build skills and expertise as accountability for their off-campus teaching increases.

Given the evidence of tensions that exist between academic Schools and External Studies Units, it appears particularly important that their relative roles in academic professional development be clearly delineated and also clearly communicated to all members of staff. A suggestion may be that External Studies Units take more responsibility in the early stages, the Schools taking over in later stages. Thus, in the early stages, the External Studies Units could act as coordinators of workshops and training sessions and then later as consultants to Deans, Schools, or course teams of academics, where they should be at pains to avoid the covert sense of imposition which is often perceived by many academics in their relations with External Studies Units.

There appears to be an obvious role for External Studies Units in the institution-wide induction and seminar programs and in ongoing technical support for print materials and non print components. For example, there appear to be some elements of academic professional development that are best handled by a central External Studies Unit such as general orientation to the institution, house style, printing, scheduling, audio visual training, vacation schools, enrolment and registration, counselling services, housing and superannuation. There are other areas of academic professional development that are appropriately handled on a School basis and these are concerned with the discipline, the content, the assessment, the field work, appropriate final projects, use of course teams and so on.

The Eastcott, Meacham, Hall model as discussed in the literature survey, provides a useful tool for directing the selection of activities. In terms of potential academic professional development activities, this model with its seven stages of concern offers what it calls a natural sequence of academic professional development for distance education and argues that higher levels of professional development activity cannot be engineered by outside agents unless lower levels of concern have been first meet. It offers a transitional approach to academic professional development and could be used by both Schools and External Studies Units to integrate the academic professional development activities. In the presentation of the model there appears an underlying assumption that academic professional development is the responsibility of the External Studies Unit and as noted in the above, this can be counterproductive. However, if the suggested conditions of delineating and communicating the relative roles have been met, it should be possible to utilise the model to advantage in the academic professional development process.

A number of institutions have professional development activities which are seen as effective and their success seems correlated to the energy and resources invested in them. These activities include using course teams, building a large team of instructional designers, targeting and release of academic staff, an involvement in the course accreditation process, induction and orientation programs, as well as the regular activities and resources such as workshops, lunchtime seminars, and handbooks.

However, few of these models have proved to be transportable and fewer have found widespread adoption outside their own institution. For example there is much talk about the course team approach, but few are committing themselves to it. Various reasons are given:

- time - they are all too busy
- lack of resources
- course teams challenge the individual academic's autonomy
- they go against the academic tradition into which almost all academics have been socialised
- the course team approach seems to need the involvement of an instructional designer and there are far too few to service adequately all teams

Another model that is highlighted at a number of institutions is the instructional design model, and it finds resistance for a number of reasons:

- it is still in its infancy and needs to be tried in a number of institutions to see whether it is suited to the Australian style;

- the role and strategies of instructional design are still underdeveloped;

- even with up to six designers in any one institution the impact is limited;

- there is considerable debate in that professional area and it is not yet recognised as a discipline even by many of its practitioners;

- even at the The Open University where all course teams were provided with instructional designers from the Institute of Educational Technology, designers gave their own idiosyncratic version of instructional design;

- many academics have their own way of doing their off-campus teaching job and there is a wide range of acceptance of these instructional design consultants from those who are extremely positive to those who are merely tolerant.

Another is the reaccreditation model and this is seen by those who use it as method of building bridges between the Units and Schools. It works where there is an institutional commitment to, and resources for, its implementation.

Other traditional practices are more difficult to recommend as they are successful in some places and not in others. Examples are the formal induction and orientation programs which are widely espoused in principle but are rarely successful. It can be suggested that the basis of their lack of success is that they are all too often organised by administration or by External Studies Units, without the involvement of the Schools, and so conflicts can easily arise unless this potential tension is appreciated by administration and Units outside the Schools.

Other traditional practices are the oft-run academic professional development workshops and lunchtime seminars. Scatter workshops and lunchtime seminars on important issues when offered to all academic staff are generally poorly attended and seem to have limited value.

In reporting the limited success of these traditional programs it is not intended to suggest that there is no place for training in the areas which many of these workshops cover, such as writing study guides, appropriate assessment, communicating effectively with students, supervising projects and so on. Rather it is stressed that for success they should be far more School based and be initiated by Boards of Studies and run on a School basis.

What does all this mean? As a first step there appears to be a need for an institutional policy for professional development in distance education that involves both the Schools and the External Studies Units; and a recognition that distance education is complex and that responsibilities must be accepted by the administration for the establishment of policy and provision of resources to the Heads of Schools or other appropriately designated personnel for the initiation of programs and for the involvement of External Studies Units as consultants and assistants.

As already noted, the ideal of academic professional development is the sensitive marrying of activities of both External Studies Units and Schools, building a bridge for both and offering support for staff who are identified as needing to build strengths as the political demands for accountability increase.

## D. Recommendations

The evidence gathered in the case studies and the literature suggests a number of general conditions which, when fulfilled, should provide for effective professional development practices in distance education. Thus, it is recommended that the arrangements at each institution should include:

### 1. Policy

The provision of an explicit and documented policy on academic professional development for distance education at the institutional level, which acknowledges the importance of, and which rewards, good distance education practices.

### 2. Responsibility and Communication

The establishment of clear lines of responsibility addressing issues such as the relative responsibilities of External Studies Units and Academic Departments, particularly Heads of Schools, in implementing the process, and the arrangements for communicating the details of the institutional program to all staff. In delineating responsibilities, there is evidence to suggest that External Studies Units could be given primary responsibility for orientation programs and for technical and administrative matters, and could act on a consultancy basis in relation to Academic Departments for ongoing professional development.

### 3. Resources

The commitment of adequate resources to provide for academic professional development for distance education, including the administrative infrastructure for coordinating and supporting the process.

### 4. Selection of Appropriate Staff

The selection of staff who are sympathetic to, and willing to respond to, the special demands of distance education

### 5. Induction Programs

The implementation of a formal induction program to orientate new staff to distance education and the consideration of distance education techniques in delivering part of that induction program and in the provision of on-the-job training.

### 6. Ongoing Professional Development

The offering of ongoing professional development programs on a School rather than an institutional basis in a manner which takes account of the experience of the academics and the practices that have been found useful in the particular institution. However, consideration should be given to:

**Non-traditional Approaches**

utilising, where appropriate, non-traditional approaches such as course teams, instructional designers, staff relief, and small group collaboration on actual tasks;

**Traditional Approaches**

the use of print resources, and of traditional workshops and seminars for developing specific skills organised on a School basis with experienced academic staff as seminar leaders;

**Academic Collaboration**

providing for encouragement of formal and informal opportunities for peer review and support, including staff meetings, modelling of materials and practices, and in-house conferences; and including measures to draw together External Studies staff and Academic staff, particularly through working side by side on projects which will encourage each to have respect for the professionalism of the other and appreciate the complementary skills which have potential for enhancing the teaching process.

### 7. Institutional Collaboration

The development of communication channnels between institutions through visits and exchanges of personnel and jointly developed study materials with an emphasis on rationalisation and coordination between institutions.

### 8. Evaluation of Staff Development Methods

Methods of professional development which can be monitored using measurable criteria and which are formalised, communicated and implemented through the designated lines of responsibility.

## E. A Possible Australian 'Academic and Professional Group' Model for Professional Development in Distance Education

While a clearly defined Australian model for professional development in distance education has yet to emerge, that which appears from this study to have most potential to assist the professional development of new and existing staff, and to enhance distance education for teaching and learning, is an adaptation of the course team model.

Such a model, if accepted at institutional policy level with resources committed to its implementation, offers a framework in which all of the above recommendations could be integrated. While it is recognised that this model is not part of the experience of most Australian academics, it does provide a structure through which many of the tensions and difficulties that have been experienced in distance education can be met and, within this context, can provide initial and on-going professional development for all who participate.

With such a group model, academics new to distance education would not have the heavy load of course development immediately thrust upon them as is now all too frequently the case. They would be eased into distance education, and this would enable the above recommended strategies to be used, in the first instance, to enhance ways and means of teaching students at a distance. After some experience they would further develop skills through participating in the group.

The term 'course team' has immediate overtones of the style and methods of The Open University in the United Kingdom, and in the Australian context an alternative expression would be preferred with connotations of an 'academic and professional group'.

Such an 'academic and professional group' would include a manager responsible for the coordination of the curriculum, the development of the course content, the production and delivery to students and teachers, and the on-going formative evaluation. Perhaps a helpful comparison is that of a film producer who is responsible for coordinating the script, casting, production and marketing of a motion picture.

The group would also have academic specialists from within the institution and invited external consultants from other institutions, as well as from business and industry as appropriate; plus educational developers, instructional designers, editors, graphic artists, media and computer specialists and printers. It would be desirable that academics who will use the course material, but who are not part of the formal group, would have some mechanism to offer their suggestions and points of view.

It is recognised that such a group model is time consuming and does not fit easily into an Australian academic's experience. Nevertheless, it was evident from this project that centralised development of course materials within the TAFE systems enabled a wide spectrum of professionals to be used in course development, and that teachers beyond that group were able and willing to use the materials with their students.

It would be expected that sensitive appreciation of the 'levels of concern' of participants would be necessary for such a model to to gain acceptance and become effective. Nonetheless it is a model capable of improving the newcomer's entrance into distance education and providing on-going professional development, while ensuring that the study materials for students are at a high standard.

## Bibliography


Agency for International Development (Dept of State). Development Communication Report. Report No.49. Washington DC: Clearing House on Development Communication; 1985.

Australian Committee of Directors and Principals in Advanced Education Limited, (ACDP). Academic Staff Development in Colleges of Advanced Education. Reference Document No. 4. Canberra: ACDP; 1984.

Australian Committee of Directors and Principals in Advanced Education Limited, (ACDP). Report on Staff Development and Training Needs of General Staff in Colleges of Advanced Education. Reference Document No.12. Canberra: ACDP; 1987.

Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee. Academic Staff Development. Report of AVCC Working Party. Occasional Paper No.4. Canberra: AVCC; 1981.

Baath, J.A. Postal Contacts and Some Other Means of Two-Way Communication: Practices and Opinions at a Number of European Correspondence Schools. Sweden: University of Lund Pedagogical Reports; 1976.

Baath, J.A. A List of Ideas for the Construction of Distance Education Courses, in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983.

Basich, P. Teleconferencing for Distance Education and Training: Is The Open University Experience Typical? Optel Report No.16. Paper based on a talk presented at a conference titled 'Teleconferences in Europe: Evaluations and Perspectives.' Montpellier, France; 1985.

Bates, T. Trends in the Use of Audio-Visual Media in Distance Education, in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983.

Beare, H. Education by Satellite, in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983.

Billing, D. The Nature and Scope of Staff Development in Institutions of Higher Education, in Elton, L. & Simmonds, K. (eds) Staff Development in Higher Education. Papers presented at the twelfth annual conference of the Society for Research into Higher Education Ltd. University of Surrey; 1976.

Brandt, D. Improving University Teaching through Staff Development Programs, in Elton, L. & Simmonds, K. (eds) Staff Development in Higher Education. Papers presented at the twelfth annual conference of the Society for Research into Higher Education Ltd. University of Surrey; 1976.

Campbell-Thrane, L. Correspondence Education Moves Toward the Year 2000: Proceedings of the National Invitational Forum on Correspondence Education. Columbus: National Center For Research in Vocational Eduction, Ohio State University; 1984.

Coldeway, D. Individualized Instruction Under Control: The Design of Distance Learning Environments to Maximize Learner Success. Edmonton Alberta: Athabasca University; 1980(a).

Coldeway, D. *An Examination of Tutor Management Strategies for Use in Distance Education.* Edmonton, Alberta: Athabasca University; 1980(b).

Coldeway, D. Research and Evaluation of Distance Education for The Adult Learner. Final Report of REDEAL Project. Edmonton, Alberta: Athabasca University; 1980(c).

Coldeway, D. et al. Factors Affecting Learner Motivation in Distance Education: The Interaction Between Learner Attributes and Learner Course Performance. A Redeal Research Report. Edmonton, Alberta: Athabasca University; 1980.

Danarajan, R. Bibliography on Distance Education prepared for University Sains Malaysia Conference, Penang; 1981.

Daniel, J.S. & Marquis, C. Interaction and Independence: Getting the Mixture Right. *Teaching at a Distance*, No.14; 1979.

Daniel, J.S. & Smith, W.A.S. Opening Open Universities: The Canadian Experience. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, Vol.IX, No. 2; 1979.

Daniel, J. S. Stroud, M. & Thompson, J. (eds) *Learning at a Distance: A World Perspective.* Edmonton, Alberta: Athabasca University, International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE); 1982.

Dawkins, J. S. Higher Education. Higher Education - A Policy Discussion Paper circulated by The Hon. J.S. Dawkins, MP, Minister for Employment, Education and Training; 1987.

de Jardon, L. K. (ed) *Writing for Distance Education. A Manual for Writers of Distance Education Texts and Independent Study Materials.* Cambridge: International Extension College; 1983.

Dekkers, J. The Development of an External Degree Course for Nurses at Capricornia Institute in *Distance Education in Nurse Education*, Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Eastcott, L. R. External Studies as an Innovation for the Academic. A paper presented to ASPESA Forum, Fiji; 1981.

Ediger, M. Improving University Administration. *ASPESA Papers*, No.1; 1986.

Einsiedel, A. Evaluation Study of an Expanded Education System. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education. Montreal, Quebec; 1985.

Elton, L. et al. Academic Staff Training at a Distance - A Case Study. *Programmed Learning and Educational Technology*, Vol. 23, No.1; 1986.

Fenwick, J. Workshop Reflections, in *Distance Education in Nurse Education* , Churchill Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Fitzpatrick, J. Distance Education, Geographers and Communications. *ASPESA Newsletter*, Vol.10, No. 2; 1984.

Flinck, R. & Flinck, A. Various Designs of Distance Teaching at Swedish Universities. Paper presented at the Thirteenth World Conference of the International Council for Distance Education, Melbourne; 1985.

Forster, A., King, B. & Luke, R. Professional Development for Distance Educators. Paper presented at the Thirteenth World Conference of the International Council for Distance Education, Melbourne; 1985.

Fox, D. Staff Development - Policy, Practice and Participation, in Elton, L. & Simmonds, K. (eds) Staff Development in Higher Education. Papers presented at the twelfth annual conference of the Society for Research into Higher Education Ltd. University of Surrey; 1976.

Geering, A.D. Associate Diploma in Training and Development. Evaluation Report of the Study Units and Course. Adelaide: South Australian College of Advanced Education, Underdale Campus; 1984.

Graves, B. Distance Learning: Are You Ready? *American School and University,* Vol. 57, No.4; 1984.

Hall, G. E. The Concerns-Based Adoption Model: A Developmental Conceptualisation of the Adoption Process within Educational Institutions. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago; 1974.

Haughey, M. The Continuing Professional Education Interactive Satellite Interface. Paper presented at the Joint Conference of the Northwest Adult Education Association and Alaska Education Association, Anchorage, Alaska; 1983.

Haughey, M. & Murphy, P. Using High Tech: Continuing Professional Education by an Interactive Satellite System. *Improving College and University Teaching.* Vol. 32, No.4; 1984(a).

Haughey, M. & Murphy, P. Extending Continuing Professional Education in an Era of Fiscal Constraint. Paper presented at the Learned Societies Conference, Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education, Guelph, Ontario; 1984(b).

Holdampf, B. Innovative Associate Degree Nursing Program - Remote Area. A Comprehensive Final Report on an Exemplary and Innovative Proposal. Big Spring, Texas: Howard Country Junior College; 1983.

Holmberg, B. *Distance Education: A Short Handbook.* Malmo, Sweden: Hermods; 1974.

Holmberg, B. *Distance Education; A Survey and Bibliography.* London: Kogan Page; 1977.

Holmberg, B. *Status and Trends of Distance Education.* London: Kogan Page; 1981.

Holmberg, B. *Recent Research into Distance Education. Vols. I & II.* FernUniversitat, Hagen, West Germany, Zentrales Institut fur Fernstudienforschung; 1982.

Holmberg, B. Introduction to Section 6 'Course Development', in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983.

Hoyt, D.P. & Howard, G.S. The Evaluation of Faculty Development Programs, *Research in Higher Education,* No. 8; 1978.

International Extension College. *Writing for Distance Education. Samples Booklet.* Cambridge: International Extension College; 1983.

Jacobs, S. The Orientation Practices of Australian Education Institutions as regards Staff New to Distance Education. Unpublished thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Business Degree of Curtin University of Technology; 1987.

James, D. Educational Technology Curriculum Development and Distance Education in the United Kingdom. A Report on Overseas Leave. Toorak: Toorak State College; 1978.

Jenkins, J. Tell Me How to Write, in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983.

Jenkins, J. *Course Development. A Manual for Editors of Distance Teaching Materials.* International Extension College, Cambridge: Commonwealth Secretariat, London; 1985.

Jevons F. Distance Education in a Mixed Institution: Working Towards Parity. *Distance Education* , Vol. 5, No. 1; 1984.

Johnson, R. The Provision of External Studies in Australian Higher Education. A Report for the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission Evaluations and Investigations Program. Canberra: CTEC; 1983.

Johnson, R. Efficiency and Effectiveness in Distance Education: The Case of Nurse Education in *Distance Education in Nurse Education*, Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Kaufman, D. Practice and Theory of Distance Education: Course Blueprint. *Distance Education*, Vol.5, No. 2; 1984.

Keegan, D.J. On Defining Distance Education. *Distance Education*, Vol.1, No.1; 1980.

Keegan D. J. Introduction to Section 5 'Choice of Medium: The Communications Technology', in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* Croom Helm: London; 1983.

Kelly, M.E. Course Teams and Instructional Design in Australian Distance Education: A reply to Shaw and Taylor, *Distance Education*, Vol.8, No.1; 1987.

King, B. & Willmott, G. Staff Development in Distance Education. A paper presented at the ASPESA Conference, Toowoomba; 1983.

Laverty, J.R. Kevin C. Smith's External Studies at New England - A Silver Jubilee Review 1955-1979. *Distance Education*, Vol.1, No.2; 1980.

Law, M. & Sissons, L. The Challenge of Distance Education. *New Directions for Continuing Education.*, No. 26; 1985.

Livingston, K. Some Reflections on the Application of Information Technology. *ASPESA Papers*, No.3; 1987.

Ljosa, E. & Sandvold, K. E. The Student's Freedom of Choice with the Didactical Structure, in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983.

Mansson, N.O. Hermod's Computer-Assisted Home-Study System. *Epistolodidaktika*, No. 2; 1977.

McIntosh, N.E. & Morrison, V. Student Demand, Progress and Withdrawal: The Open University's First Four Years. *Higher Education Review*, Vol.7, No.1; 1974.

McMurray, A. & Parker-Siahaan, A. What can Distance Education Offer the Remote Area Nurse, in *Distance Education in Nurse Education*, Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Meacham, E.D. Distance Teaching: Innovation, Individual Concerns and Staff Development. *Distance Education* ,Vol. 3, No. 2; 1982.

Meacham, E.D. Suggestions arising from an Investigation of Distance Education in the United Kingdom: Some Implications for Distance Education. Occasional Paper No.3 . Wagga Wagga: Division of External Studies, Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education; 1985.

Meacham, E.D. & Evans, D.E. The Design of Study Materials, *Distance Education.* Wagga Wagga: Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education; 1982.

Meligi, M. Distance Teaching and Learning: A Case Study. Paper presented at the 32nd World Assembly of the International Council on Education for Teaching, Vancouver; 1985.

Mitton, R. *Practical Research in Distance Teaching: A Handbook for Developing Countries.* Cambridge: International Extension College; 1982.

Muller, K. et al. Teaching at a Distance: Reflections on the Relationship between Discipline-Based and General Teaching Theories. *Distance Education,* Vol.6, No.1; 1985.

Nation, Daryl. A Personal Reflection, in *Distance Education in Nurse Education*, Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Nisbet, J. Innovation: Bandwagon or Hearse? *Bulletin of Victorian Institute of Educational Research*, No.33; 1974.

Northcott, P. & Holt, D. Professional Development Programmes for Accountants Through Distance Education: An Australian Study. *Programmed Learning and Educational Technology.* Vol. 23, No.1; 1986.

Osborne, J.O. Recollections of Someone Who Isn't a Nurse in *Distance Education in Nurse Education,* Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Parer, M.S. Resource Materials and Journals in Distance Education. Paper presented at the Twelfth World Conference of the International Council for Distance Education, Vancouver; 1982(a).

Parer, M. S. Review of Satellite Conference held at Deakin University. *ASPESA Newsletter*, Vol.8, No.7, 1982(b).

Parer, M.S. Review: Distance Education at Swedish Universities.; *ASPESA Newsletter,* Vol.10, No.2, 1984.

Parer, M.S. *Textual Design and Student Learning*, Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Parer, M.S., Croker, S. & Shaw, N. *Institutional Support and Rewards for Academic Staff Involved in Distance Education*, Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Perraton, H. *Training Teachers at a Distance.* London: Commonwealth Secretariat; 1984.

Peruniak, G. *Seminars as an Instructional Strategy in Distance Education.* Edmonton, Alberta: Athabasca University; 1980.

Ramsden, P. The Contribution of Student Feedback to Staff Development, in Elton, L. & Simmonds, K. (eds) Staff Development in Higher Education. Papers presented at the twelfth annual conference of the Society for Research into Higher Education Ltd. University of Surrey; 1976.

Riley, J. *The Problems of Writing Correspondence Lessons:* DERG Papers, No.11. Walton Hall: Distance Education Research Group, The Open University; 1984.

Riley, J. The Evolution of Professional Practice at The Open University. *Programmed Learning and Educational Technology,* Vol. 23, No.1; 1986.

Riley, J. & Francis, B. Can You Make Faculty Staff More Efficient? Association for Institutional Research Forum Paper; 1978.

Roberts, D. Teaching Externally: Lecturers' Viewpoints. Occasional Paper 6. Wagga Wagga: Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education; 1986.

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. *Staff Training and Development Programme.* Melbourne: Staff Development Unit, Personnel Services Group, RMIT; 1987.

Ryan, P. A Report on Distance Education, in *Distance Education in Nurse Education*, Churchill: Centre for Distance Learning, Gippsland Institute; 1988.

Sewart, D., Keegan, D. & Holmberg, B. (eds) *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983.

Shaw, B. & Taylor, J. Instructional Design: Distance Education and Academic Tradition. *Distance Education,* Vol.5, No.2; 1984.

Slater G. & Tremaine, M. Establishing Staff Development Programmes in the University Setting : The Client/Consultant Relationship. Paper presented at the first joint AARE/NZARE Conference, Christchurch; 1987.

Smith, B. Open Tertiary Education - Some Implications of Different Approaches. *Vestes,* Vol.22, No.1; 1979.

Smith, K. Course Development Procedures. *Distance Education,* Vol.1, No.1; 1980.

Sparkes, J. On Choosing Teaching Methods to Match Educational Needs, in Sewart et al. *Distance Education: International Perspectives.* London: Croom Helm; 1983(a).

Sparkes, J. The Problem of Creating a Discipline of Distance Education. *Distance Education,* Vol.4, No.2; 1983(b).

Sparkes, J. On the Design of Effective Distance Teaching Courses. Paper presented at the Thirteenth World Conference of the International Council for Distance Education, Melbourne; 1985.

Spencer, D.C. Thinking About Learning Systems. Working Paper 19. London: Council of Educational Technology; 1980.

Swedish Institute. *Adult Education in Sweden. Fact Sheets on Sweden.* Stockholm: Swedish Institute; 1985.

Taylor, J. et al. Student Persistence in Distance Education: A Cross-Cultural Multi-Institutional Perspective. *Distance Education,* Vol.7, No.1; 1986.

Tomlinson, D. et al. Teaching and Learning at Home: Distance Education and the Isolated Child. Research Series. No.4, Nedlands, Western Australia: National Centre for Research on Rural Education; 1985.

Trask, M. School Library Development, in Proceedings of UNESCO Workshop on Training Courses for Teachers and Teacher Librarians. South Pacific Region, Suva; 1982.

United Nations Development Program. Regional Technical Co-operation for Training Educational Personnel in Planning and Management Using Distance Teaching and Other Techniques. Bangkok, Thailand: United National Development Program; 1983.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. Distance Learning for Teacher Education. Report of a Technical Working Group Meeting, Islamabad, Pakistan, 1981. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO; 1982.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Training of Personnel in Distance Education. Report of a Regional Seminar, Islamabad, Pakistan, 1983. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO, Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific; 1983.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, Bangkok, (Thailand). Distance Learning Systems and Structures - Training of Distance Educators. Report of a Sub-Regional Workshop. Colombo, Sri Lanka; 1984.

Warren Piper, D. Staff Development in Universities, in Elton, L. & Simmonds, K. (eds) Staff Development in Higher Education. Papers presented at the twelfth annual conference of the Society for Research into Higher Education Ltd. University of Surrey; 1976.

Willen, B. Distance Education at Swedish Universities. An Evaluation of the Experimental Programme and a Follow-up Study. Revised edition of PhD Dissertation, Uppsala University; 1981.

Willen, B. *Self-Directed Learning and Distance Education. Can Distance Education be a Good Alternative for the Self-Directed Learners?* Department of Education, Uppsala University; 1984(a).

Willen, B. *Strategies for Strengthening Student-Teacher Contact in Distance Education: Results of an Evaluation of Distance Education in Swedish Universities.* Walton Hall: The Open University; 1984(b).

Williams, V. *Communication Skills Workshop for Tutors: The Manual.* Edmonton, Alberta: Athabasca University; 1980.

Willmott, G. & King. B. Professional Development Courses in Distance Education. *Distance Education,* Vol.5, No.1; 1984.

Worthington, R. *Distance Education: Bibliographical Resources for Queensland Teachers.* Brisbane: Department of Education; 1982.

## APPENDIX A

## TELEPHONE SURVEY - LIST OF INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Beecroft, R. | Tasmanian State Institute of Technology, Tas |
| 2. | Boud, D. | University of New South Wales, NSW |
| 3. | Croker, S. | University of New South Wales, NSW |
| 4. | Dekkers, J. | Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education, Qld |
| 5. | Fenwick, J. | Victoria College of Agriculture and Horticulture, Vic |
| 6. | Fogerty, D. | Mayfield Centre, Vic |
| 7. | Foks, J. | Victorian Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Off-Campus Network, Vic |
| 8. | Gardner, H. | Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, NSW |
| 9. | Guiton, P. | Murdoch University, WA |
| 10. | Harman, G. | University of New England, NSW |
| 11. | Hosking, S. | Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education, Vic |
| 12. | Inglis, A. | Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Vic |
| 13. | Juler, P. | Deakin University, Vic |
| 14. | Kelly, M. | University of Queensland, Qld |
| 15. | King, B. | South Australian College of Advanced Education, SA |
| 16. | Livingstone, K. | Darwin Institute of Technology, NT |
| 17. | Lonsdale, A. | Curtin University of Technology, WA |
| 18. | MacKinnon, L. | Correspondence School, Vic |
| 19. | Mitchell, I. | South Australian College of Advanced Education, SA |
| 20. | Nunan, T. | South Australian College of Advanced Education, SA |
| 21. | Roe, E. | University of Queensland, Qld |
| 22. | Ross, B. | Griffith University, Qld |
| 23. | Rowe, M. | Tasmania TAFE, Tas |
| 24. | Ruiz, L. | Tasmanian State Institute of Technology, Tas |
| 25. | Scriven, B. | Brisbane College of Advanced Education, Qld |
| 26. | Smith, P. | Gordon Institute, Vic |
| 27. | White, V. | Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, Qld |

## SURVEY INSTRUMENTS FOR CASE STUDIES

## RESEARCH PROJECT

## PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO PREPARE ACADEMICS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

A project for the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission's
Standing Committee on External Studies

Project Director: Dr Michael Parer,
Head, Educational Development and Research,
Gippsland Institute

August 1987

1. Your Name.....

2. Your title in the institution .....

3. How long have you been involved in external studies?.....

4. What is your understanding of Professional Preparation and Staff Development of academic staff for Distance Education?

.....

.....

.....

5. How important does your institution see Professional Development and Staff Development of academics for Distance Education? (Please circle one of the following and comment at the interview.)

Most important
Important
Some importance
Not important

6. How would you describe your institution's policy with regard to preparing academics for Distance Education?

.....

.....

7. How is this policy made clear to incoming staff?

.....

.....

8. What is your own responsibility regarding Professional Preparation and Staff Development of academic staff for Distance Education?

.....

.....

9. What does your External Studies Unit (or similar division) do to prepare staff for Distance Education?

.....

.....

10. How do your Deans/Heads of School/Department/Faculty prepare their staff for Distance Education?

.....

.....

11. How are your new staff prepared to work in Distance Education?

.....

12. If you have an induction program, how effective do you think it is in preparing new staff for Distance Education? (Please circle one and comment at the interview.)

Extremely effective
Effective
Somewhat effective
Not effective

13. Please describe your institution's on-going professional development program for staff who have been working in Distance Education a few years.

.....

.....

14. Are there some special activities that you plan to try that will better prepare your staff for Distance Education?

.....

15 Do you use a Handbook to prepare yourself and staff for Distance Education? .....

If yes, in what way?.....

.....

16. What professional development is given to members of the External Studies Unit to prepare them for Distance Education?

.....

.....

17. What do you think would be the best way to help academic staff work in Distance Education?

.....

.....

.....

.....

18. Any other comments about preparing academic staff for Distance Education?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Many thanks for your help

King regards

Dr Michael S Parer

## INSTITUTIONAL DATA WITH REGARD TO YOUR DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAM

1a Number of external students that you had enrolled at 30 April 1987 .....

1b Number of funded EFT units or WSU for external students in 1987 .....

2a Number of award courses (e.g. BA, BEd) taught externally in 1987 .....

2b Number of units (e.g. Music 4121, Maths 8763) taught externally in 1987 .....

.....

3. Number of academic staff who teach external units: Full time ..... Part time .....

4a Do you have a policy on Professional Preparation and Staff Development for External Studies? .....

If yes, may we have a copy? .....

4b How is your policy on Distance Education made clear to new staff? .....

.....

5a Where does the responsibility lie in your institution to prepare staff of Distance Education? .....

5b Names and positions of those responsible for implementing your professional development program. .....

6 What is the role of Heads of Schools in preparing staff for Distance Education?

.....

7 What responsibility does your External Studies Unit (or similar division) have to prepare staff for Distance Education? .....

8 Do you have a handbook on Distance Education for your staff? .....

If yes, may we have a copy? .....

9a Do you have an induction program to prepare new staff for Distance Education? .....

.....

9b If yes, please give details .....

10 How many titles (books and journals) on Distance Education do you have in your institution's library? .....

11 How many of your colleagues are members of the Australian and South Pacific External Studies Association (ASPESA)? .....

## APPENDIX C

## REASONS FOR ELIMINATING THE INFORMATION GAINED FROM BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY IN THIS REPORT

It was recognised quite early that "an examination of how business and industry establish policies and practices for staff induction and development", would be a major study in itself, and although three organisations were included in our survey, the information obtained did not contribute substantially to this project. This was because there was a fundamental difference of focus in the interviews conducted with staff of the educational institutions and those with representatives of the organisations where education is not the raison d'etre. In the former case the interviews focused on the ways that educational institutions were providing for the development of staff skills in delivering their academic product, and only infrequently was the distance education mode used to develop these distance education skills. In the latter case the interviews focused on how the distance education mode was used to provide for the training needs of staff but not on how staff skills in providing distance education were developed.

Thus, the two sets of interviews were not directly comparable, and in the context of this project, the business/industry interviews did not offer a significant contribution towards evaluating professional development practice in relation to distance education. It was notable, however, that practices in these non-educational settings appeared remarkably established and trouble-free. They tended to be very well organised and to be accepted and supported both by management and staff as an essential function in the organisation. Training was provided for a 'captive' group who accepted it as a condition of employment and as a means of career advancement. It was run in a businesslike way to facilitate the main functions of the organisation. The context was therefore much more structured than the tertiary environment and the need to develop student support systems, which many academics considered to be an intrinsic part of professional development for distance education, did not appear to be significant in these settings.

Nevertheless, the development of technical and administrative skills for distance education, is obviously relevant to either type of setting and there would appear to be obvious advantages in communication between personnel from business, industry and education. In this study it was striking how little of this existed. One of the businesses operated in a provincial city where a tertiary institution was located; both used the distance education mode but there was no mutual collaboration between the two.

It is proposed that a submission will be made to investigate distance education in business and industry.

## RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

In the initial literature search, and the preliminary discussion with 27 academics in professional development and distance education for this project, some areas emerged as significant in order for academics to gain skills and information relevant for distance education. We offer this information as a resource under the following headings:

(a) bibliography
(b) introduction to distance education
(c) instructional design
(d) course development
(e) course writing
(f) teaching methods
(g) use of technology
(h) administration
(i) research and evaluation.

(a) **Bibliography**: Extensive international perspectives on developments in distance education can be found in the works of Holmberg (1977, 1981, 1982), Sewart, Keegan and Holmberg (eds) (1983), Keegan (1983) and in bibliographies by Danarajan (1981) and Parer (1982a) . Worthington (1982), in providing bibliographical resources for Queensland teachers, listed all the resources relevant to distance teaching which are held in the Department of Education Library and the Bardon Professional Development Centre Library, except for ERIC microfiche. However, the distance education journals published by The Open University and the Australian and South Pacific External Studies Association (ASPESA) remain the most valuable resources, along with a number of in-house publications from Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, Deakin University, Gippsland Institute, Athabasca University, FernUniversitat, Cambridge, and the Scandinavian distance education institutions and now the journals from Canada, USA and Venezuela which all add to the growing literature on distance education, and all have modest and passing references to professional development.

(b) **Introduction to Distance Education**: Keegan (1980) analysed some descriptive definitions of distance education. Forms of distance education were described and an explanation offered of why 'distance education' is the suitable English term to use. Campbell-Thrane (1984) presented the proceedings from a National Invitational Forum on Correspondence Education and the Swedish Institute (1985) covered aspects of distance education in its description of forms of education and training available for adults in Sweden.

McIntosh and Morrison (1974) drew attention to increasing community awareness of The Open University in the United Kingdom as measured by the number of applicants, particularly women. The article emphasised that the occupation of students is a factor likely to enable prediction of success or withdrawal. Smith (1979), considered methods and approaches which might be adopted, together with a policy of totally open access, to ensure most university education is made accessible to 'non academic' students, and that student success remains high. Examples were drawn from The Open University and the University of Paris at Vincennes.

Laverty (1980), writing as Director of Queensland University's External Studies Department, took issue with certain of Kevin Smith's beliefs about external studies programs at the University of New England and discussed residential schools, administrative and counselling systems, academic responsibility and staff development possibilities and needs.

(c) **Instructional Design**: Shaw and Taylor (1984) argued that there is a need to support with staff development those traditional face-to-face teachers who are thrust into the public arena of distance education and suggested adoption of a team approach where subject matter and instructional design experts are equally responsible for distance education course development. Factors influencing a team approach were discussed. Jevons (1984) described the Deakin experience of the course teams appproach.

Meacham and Evans (1982) provided a manual as the foundation for the design of effective distance education teaching materials, based on practical experience and theoretical perspectives. Osborne (1988) offered the perspective of an instructional designer of distance nurse education.

(d) **Course Development**: Baath (1976) considered a variety of means of communication for distance education which have relevance for course development. Smith (1980) examined five models of external development i.e. the course team model, the author/editor model, the author/faculty model, the educational adviser model, the intuition model, and gave examples of how these work in different institutions.

Sparkes (1985) offered pragmatic guidance to assist academic staff in designing effective distance education courses, which covered the need for designers to be aware of their educational aims, and the selection of different media and methods for effective learning. Discussion of a brief taxonomy of types of learning were followed by descriptions of corresponding strategies. Steps in the design of a course were also considered. Explicit guidance was provided to teaching staff by Jenkins (1985) in her manual intended to train distance education staff on how to develop and edit teaching materials. A regrettable aspect of the designer-editor-academic teacher tension is that many of the support staff in distance education find the stress and tension such that they move on and out of distance education involvement.

Other suggestions for course development and delivery which have emerged from research or experience in distance education are found in: James (1978) whose proposals for a distance-taught, post-graduate diploma in educational development, and for teaching educational technology at a distance were developed with a view to meeting the needs at Toorak State College; Ljosa and Sandvold (1983) who considered the effect of political reforms in Norway on that country's correspondence courses and looked at new demands on the developers of course material and the changing role of the tutor; Kaufman (1984) who described a course prepared for The Open Learning Institute of British Columbia to provide educators and trainers with the knowledge and skills to design and implement distance education programs; and Dekkers (1988), McMurray and Parker-Siahaan (1988) and Ryan (1988) who all discussed aspects of course development for distance education as they apply to nurse education in Australia.

(e) **Course Writing:** Baath (1983) provided a list of factors to be considered in connection with the construction of a course, and a list of ideas for the construction of distance education courses. Holmberg (1983) offered particular assistance for staff writers on how to divide study materials into course units.

Jenkins (1983) offered some suggestions about the content and conduct of training in course writing and the manual by de Jardon (ed) (1983) provided six instructional units which offer guidance in the process of writing printed educational materials. A samples booklet

from the International Extension College (1983) offered approaches to the format, design and layout of printed instructional materials for distance education which were illustrated in 36 samples which accompany the manual.

However, Riley's (1984) review of current guides and advice on preparing distance educational materials suggested that such aids are inadequate to help solve the problems faced by course developers. She used case studies of the course materials drafting process at The Open University.

(f) **Teaching Methods**: An early work by Holmberg (1974) provided information about distance education, its application and problems. Written for practitioners, the work concentrated on two-way communication, with little attention to the media of television and radio.

Authors who have considered teaching methods in distance education from the learner's viewpoint include Daniel and Marquis (1979) who discussed the correct mixture of interaction and independence; Coldeway (1980a) who described a new three semester system for distance education with an individualised instructional environment designed to accommodate incoming adult learners with little or no previous experience in distance education; Willen (1984a) who analysed self-directed learning and distance education; and Tomlinson et al (1985) who, in reporting a study of isolated children, suggested ways of improving learning materials and cautioned that more needs to be known about how children learn in isolation before new communication techniques can be used effectively.

Aspects of teaching in a distance education setting were considered by: Peruniak (1980) who saw seminars as an instructional strategy for adult learners; Sparkes (1983a) who related teaching methods to educational needs; Flinck and Flinck (1985) who discussed various distance teaching forms in Swedish Universities; and Roberts (1986) who offered the perspectives of academic staff who have been involved in teaching externally.

Issues pertaining to teaching and learning via distance education were also raised by Sparkes (1983b) who argued that an academic discipline displays certain characteristics and functions, and questioned whether distance education, in its current state, reflects these characteristics; Law and Sissons (1985) who looked at the problems and challenges of distance education, exploring the roles of educator and learner and their interrelationship, and discussing techniques that provide structure and dialogue between learner and educator; and Muller et al (1985) who discussed the development of Didaktik, a teaching and learning theory which investigates relationships between discipline-based and general teaching theories. They discussed the need for concretisation of general teaching models in terms of discipline-based teaching theory in distance education and postulated the necessity of a theory of distance education based on practical experience.

Papers which consider the relationship of nurse education to distance education include those by Johnson (1988) who related nurse education to the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education; and Fenwick (1988) and Nation (1988) offered perspectives on developments in nurse education from their respective points of view as an agriculturalist and a sociologist involved in distance education.

(g) **Use of Technology**: Keegan (1983) discussed the pros and cons of various forms of media available to educational institutions. Bates (1983) considered the use of audio-visual media in distance education and Fitzpatrick (1984) suggested some multidisciplinary perspectives of inter-communications technology for distance educators all of which have implications for staff development among academics brought up in a traditional tertiary environment. The 1985 report of the Agency for International Development concerned, primarily, interactive radio for instruction and described three radio projects in developing countries that have proven it to be a successful tool for educational development. Some implications for staff development were discussed.

Mansson (1977) discussed a project designed to improve tutor feedback to students through the use of computers and Graves (1984) described a regional forum on distance learning, including telephone, radio or television, and downloading computer software from a central location. Basich (1985) surveyed the various teleconferencing trials at The Open University and attempted to analyse why they have been relatively unsuccessful compared to other new media initiatives such as audio cassette and computer assisted learning.

The use of satellite for education was considered by Beare (1983) who cautioned against the introduction of grandiose, unrealistic and over-ambitious schemes. Haughey (1983), and Haughey and Murphy (1984a and b) discussed the use of an interactive satellite system for continuing professional education.

Livingston (1987) focused on the broader issues relevant to any professional group confronted with contemporary education technology and discussed the need for staff training in this area as an ongoing process.

(h) **Administration**: Resources relating to the administration of distance education include Daniel and Smith's (1979) examination from a managerial perspective, of the two open universities created in Canada in the 1970s (Athabasca University in Alberta and the Tele-university in Quebec), and Johnson's (1983) national review of external studies in Australia which considered, from a broad perspective, aspects of external studies in this country, including reasons for growth, the problems involved, the need for coordination, and possible salient concerns of those responsible. These leave the question of staff development very much in limbo, but Ediger (1986) focused particularly on ways of improving university administration and discussed the method of hiring and employing a Head of Division as an example.

(i) **Research and Evaluation**: Focus on factors affecting learning by distance education was provided by Coldeway et al (1980) who, as part of the massive and wide ranging REDEAL project, attempted to capitalise on the learner-attribute by the learner-performance interaction concept in exploring factors that have an impact upon learner motivation in distance education. Coldeway (1980b) made a comparison of credit completion rates, learner performance data, tutor impact and costs between tutors managed by an incentive pay scheme and tutors paid by a fixed rate. The final REDEAL report (Coldeway 1980c) contained summaries of other reports in the project and aspects of distance education delivery which affect the learner.

Other studies include Spencer's (1980) report on a second phase of a study of existing open learning experiments in the United Kingdom and Willen's (1981) evaluation of experimental distance education courses by Swedish universities in the academic year 1974-75, which included a follow-up study of students five years after commencing their courses, as well as a discussion of the decentralised Swedish model in relation to other systems. Parer (1984), in reviewing the above work, drew attention to: parallels between Swedish and Australian models; new demands on teachers of distance education; the diminishing use of technology in Sweden for distance learning; and the emergence of the importance of interaction between students and teacher. Willen (1984b) described the background, history, development and evaluation of distance education in Sweden since its inception in 1973, and examined strategies for strengthening student-teacher contact.

Taylor et al (1986) described a study which examined relationships between academic persistence and turnaround time, feedback intervals, and contacts between student and institution, beyond assignment submissions, across five institutions.

A broad perspective on research and evaluation pertaining to distance education was provided by Daniel, Stroud and Thompson (eds) (1982) in the basic document of the International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE) 1982 World Conference, which included papers and abstracts from over 120 authors representing some 25 countries.

Mitton (1982) in his handbook for developing countries examined the linking of research and action, basic methods of social research, and the uses of research in distance teaching. UNESCO (1982) presented 11 exemplar instructional packages which were the output of a process of evaluation and selection in accordance with guidelines developed at a Technical Working Group Meeting in Pakistan.

Research and evaluation studies relating to professional development include Riley and Francis' (1978) study of the efficiency of faculty of the six schools of The Open University conducted through informal interviews. This also incorporated reviews of the work of other parts of the university such as a graphic design studio and the computing service. Holdampf (1983) described an innovative nursing degree program in Texas, using students on a distant campus and students from a home campus. Geering (1984) described an evaluation of SACAE's Associate Diploma in Training and Development and Einsiedel (1985) evaluated alternative methods of delivering professional development programs to local government personnel in Alberta.